THE COMMUNIST

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The Lessons of May Day

MAY DAY in the United States reflected the deep-going changes, the growing radicalization taking place in the ranks of the working class. The number of participants in the May Day demonstrations this year was greater than at any previous time. From the figures already available it can be estimated that fully 500,000 workers and their families participated in parades, demonstrations and meetings organized either by the Communist Party directly or by the united front committees in which the Party played the leading role. In addition to this number, about 75,000 to 100,000 participated in demonstrations and meetings organized by the Socialist Party in alliance with the socialist trade union leaders, the I.W.W.'s the Musteites, the renegades (Lovestone, Cannon, Gitlow, Weisbord, etc.). The majority of this number was in New York City, while the rest of the country, for the most part, the socialists held only indoor meetings that had but a small attendance (800 in Chicago). In other places the socialists, in true social-democratic fashion, organized their May Day demonstration on the Sunday following May Day (Milwaukee).

New York was the only large city where the socialists organized a rival May Day demonstration on May Day. They did this in order to prevent the large sections of the trade unionists who wished to demonstrate on May Day together with the revolutionary sections of the workers from doing so. They did not, of course, succeed entirely, as is evident from the fact that the parade and demonstration organized by our Party and the organizations that supported it had many times the number which the socialists could rally. They did, however, succeed in rallying tens of thousands of trade unionists (I.L.G.W.U., A.C.W., building trades) to their demonstration, either by fooling these masses with "Left" slogans, or by forcing the workers in the unions under their control to come to the socialist demonstration or else pay a fine (which Zausner of the Painters Union fixed at $9 for the day). The renegades in this case acted as a "Left" cover for the Socialist Party and tried to give the appearance that the socialist demonstration represented the united front for the workers of New York.

Events themselves, not only gave the lie to this assertion, but branded it as ridiculous. The large masses who demonstrated in New York demonstrated under the banner and slogans of the United Front organized and led by the Communist Party. The socialists and the renegades were paying compliments to each other

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from their reviewing stand as to the unity they had achieved. They shouted that they had "united everyone except the Stalinists". And at that very moment, a hundred thousand workers were in Union Square, with huge battalions of paraders marching almost endlessly into the Square, and masses of workers filling every available space in the streets adjoining the Square and stretching for blocks along the line of march. This socialist-renegade "united front" reminded one only of the famous Trotzky "August bloc" in which Trotzky had united all the enemies of the Bolsheviks and pointed to the Bolsheviks, under the leadership of Lenin, as being the "only ones staying out of the united front" and as the "splitters". History has already given the verdict. The joy of the Lovestoneites and Trotzkyites at this "unity" was quite evident. They had truly found their place in the ranks of the Thomases and Waldmans, the Dubinskys and Hillmans. As for the masses who wished to demonstrate in unity with the revolutionary workers, who could be prevented from doing so only either through the pressure of the bureaucrats, or through being fooled by revolutionary phrases and slogans—these masses will be with us tomorrow, if only we expose the swindle carried through by the socialists and renegades, and if we succeed, on the basis of the united front of militant action, in leading these masses in struggle for the very slogans which the swindlers were compelled to put forward in order to fool these workers.

Our Party can point not only to the fact that we mobilized 500,000 workers in demonstration around our revolutionary slogans, as against 100,000 maximum that the socialists and all their renegade allies led, but that this year we have been able to organize more parades, demonstrations and meetings than at any previous time. In a large number of industrial cities and towns demonstrations took place for the first time. *Of greatest significance in this connection are the relatively large demonstrations of Negro and white workers that took place in Birmingham, Norfolk, Atlanta, New Orleans and other Southern cities. This breaking through in the South is one of the outstanding developments in connection with May Day.*

In a number of cities there has been an especially marked growth of the May Day demonstrations. Here in the first place must be mentioned, of course, the gigantic demonstration in New York City which was without doubt the largest demonstration this year in any capitalist country. It is also worth mentioning that after this tremendous parade and demonstration in New York City, 15,000 came to the evening meeting at Madison Square Garden organized by the Party. Of great importance are the large actions carried through in the socialist-controlled city of Milwaukee, where 3,000 workers marched in the parade, where the total number participating in

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the demonstration reached the figure of 10,000, and where, in addition to this, 3,500 workers attended an indoor rally organized by the Party at which the Party General Secretary received a tremendous ovation from an audience in which there was a large proportion of Socialist Party members. Of similar importance was the demonstration in the Farmer-Labor controlled State and in the city of Minneapolis, where 7,000 took part in the parade and some 15,000 in the demonstration. Large demonstrations were recorded in Pittsburgh (8,000), Philadelphia (30,000), Boston (20,000), Los Angeles (15,000), San Francisco (10,000). The masses who turned out to the demonstrations in Birmingham (5,000) and Detroit (10,000), in spite of the lack of a permit and the greatest display of police and other armed forces, are of tremendous significance.

Of great importance in the May Day demonstrations this year is the increased participation of workers organized by their shops who came to the demonstrations with their own banners. This included strikers who marched in an organized manner. This manifestation was especially marked in New York City but was also evidenced in Buffalo, Milwaukee and Philadelphia. In Detroit, groups of auto workers came directly from the factories (after work) to the demonstration. In other cases (International Harvester, Chicago) the workers made demands upon the bosses (reduction of speed-up) on May Day and won their demands (four machines in place of five). In Norfolk the strike of the Negro longshoremen developed directly in connection with the May Day action. Similar developments took place elsewhere. Everywhere there is recorded a greater number of A. F. of L. workers who participated in the demonstration under our leadership. In New York City, despite the efforts of the bureaucrats in some trades organized in the A. F. of L., more workers participated in the demonstration at Union Square than at the socialist demonstration.

One of the most encouraging features of almost all the demonstrations was the large participation of the working class youth, children of the working class. There was also a marked increase in the attendance of the professionals, students (New York, Detroit, etc.), and intellectuals, who joined with the workers in common demonstration.

The increase in the May Day demonstrations, of course, reflected the increasing radicalization of the workers and the growing influence of the Party as a result of the improvement in the mass work of the Party. It was, however, also due, to a large extent, to the better May Day preparations this year, especially with regard to mass agitation. In this connection a major achievement was *the*

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distribution of more than 500,000 *of the special May Day edition of the Daily Worker*, of which 200,000 were distributed in New York City. In addition, there was a distribution of leaflets numbering many millions. In New York City alone some two million leaflets were distributed. Leaflets were issued by the sections and nuclei which displayed, not only a more lively activity, but a greater initiative. Especialy important was the issuance of the Party *Shop Bulletins* and the shop leaflets, stickers, etc., that were brought right into the factory. In Detroit, for example, the comrades on the morning of May First tacked posters around the factories, threw leaflets through the windows into the shops, and in some cases displayed 20-foot banners on the factory walls. In Chicago, Cleveland and Pittsburgh serious attention was paid to reaching the factory workers. The growing initiative displayed by the comrades was further evidenced by the hoisting of red flags in many cities, among them Gary, Indiana; Paterson; Boston; Portland; Bridgeport; and Milwaukee; previous to, or on, May Day. In the latter two cities they were hoisted on top of government buildings and caused consternation to the socialist mayors who ordered them taken down and burned.

Finally it is of importance to mention that the development of the activity in the course of the May Day preparations compelled the governments of various cities, where no permission had been granted for the demonstrations, to retreat. This was made possible because the preparations for May Day were connected up with the struggles that were taking place at that time and because the Party was able to rally the support of large masses and mass organizations around the struggle for the right of the workers to parade and demonstrate on May Day. In this connection, the biggest victory was scored in New York City where the LaGuardia administration was compelled to grant to the revolutionary workers the right to demonstrate at Union Square over the combined opposition of the socialists and renegades as well as the various chambers of commerce. It is not true, however, as the socialists relate, that the Communists wished to prevent the socialists from demonstrating in Union Square. The Party from very beginning fought for a united demonstration of all workers in New York City, and failing in this, was willing to arrange for the socialists to demonstrate at Union Square at the same time that they had done the previous year. This was first accepted by the socialist leaders. They changed their plans at the last minute, only because they feared that just as last year the mass of the workers at the socialist demonstration would remain and listen to the Communist speakers. And this the socialists fear more than anything else. They maneuvered to have their parade

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so organized as to prevent the workers who came to the socialist demonstration from going to Union Square. In this, too, however, they did not entirely succeed.

Further victories in forcing the government to retreat were achieved in a number of other cities, including Newark and Chicago. In Detroit and Birmingham the government refused to the end to allow the May Day demonstrations, especially to combat the struggles of the auto workers, and miners that were taking place and the growing influence of the Party in these struggles.

Thus far we have spoken about the positive achievements as recorded in the May Day demonstrations. But there were also revealed a number of very serious weaknesses and mistakes that must be carefully studied and overcome.

First, we must record that the demonstrations were weakest in the main industrial towns and cities, such as Gary, Youngstown, and in the steel, mining, auto and other industrial centers throughout the country. The mass of the demonstrators are to be accounted for in the few big cities. This, of course, corresponds to the still weak position in the factories and slowness in carrying through the program of concentration. It must also be recorded that outside of New York City and some few cities outside of New York there were no strikes on May Day. This reflects both our weak position in the factories and in the A. F. of L. trade unions in which the mass of the trade unionists are organized. It also reflects the fact that the T.U.U.L. unions remain extremely weak in the basic industries, that our influence is still relatively weak in the most important independent unions. *From this point of view, the carrying through of the slogans of Down Tools on May Day, we have as yet effected no basic change from previous years.*

But the weaknesses here cannot be explained solely on the basis of the general weakness of our mass work, especially in the factories and trade unions. *It is also due to the mistakes made in the May Day preparations.* Chief among these mistakes and weaknesses is a *political weakness.* There existed unclarity as to the slogan of Down Tools for which the Party leadership must take full responsibility. After a discussion that it is necessary to avoid errors made at previous times when individual or groups of revolutionary workers were ordered to leave the factories and thus run the risk of dismissal, there were sent out instructions by the C.C. which failed to state clearly that while these mistakes of the past must be avoided *it is necessary to raise sharply the slogan of Down Tools in all our agitation and aim to realize this slogan in every trade union and every factory.*

But even when this serious mistake was discovered it was not

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entirely corrected. There was no self-criticism of this mistake in the press, although additional circulars were sent to the Party organizations correcting this mistake. In the *Daily Worker*, and the rest of the Party press the May Day preparations were, until almost the middle of April, limited to purely organizational material. Only then were the political slogans brought forward, and even then the Down Tools slogan did not receive sufficient explanation in the press. In addition to the failure sufficiently to popularize and explain the Down Tools slogan there were also weaknesses with regard to the popularization of the other main slogans, especially in connection with the struggle against imperialist war, for the defense of the Soviet Union. In general the slogans raised in the Party Manifesto, adopted at the Eighth Party Convention, were insufficiently popularized. The Manifesto itself was published in the special May Day edition, but the Party organizations were very slow in ordering and distributing the Manifesto leaflets in connection with the May Day preparations. In fact even on May Day itself, with the exception of New York (where 220,000 copies of the Manifesto leaflet were distributed) few districts had organized mass distribution of the Manifesto on May Day. It was only in the distribution of the May Day edition of the *Daily Worker* that we were able, in spite of this, to bring the Manifesto to the masses. *This without doubt is not due merely to organizational laxness on the part of the Party organizations. It is due primarily to a resistance to and underestimation of bringing forward the Party, an underestimation of the necessity to bring forward to the masses the revolutionary way out of the crisis.*

The weakness with regard to bringing forward the Down Tools slogan, the unclarity with regard to the necessity for and actual development of strikes on May Day, also contributed to the weakness in our work of mobilization for May Day in and around the factories. While there are notable efforts to record, on the whole it must be stated that there were insufficient efforts made to reach the factories with special leaflets, and *shop papers* through factory gate meetings, etc. Also a weakness to be recorded in this connection, is the insufficient attention to holding factory meetings at the noon-hour on May Day to reach those workers who could not yet be brought to the central demonstrations.

In connection with the fight for the united front, while the Party made some efforts and in some cities achieved results, tremendous weaknesses are to be noted. Even in New York City, where serious efforts were made, the United Front May Day Conference had delegates from only three locals of the A. F. of L., while on other occasions we have already had tens of A. F. of L. locals participating. This shortcoming is the more significant in the face of

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the fact that organized oppositions exist in some 60 A. F. of L. locals, and Party and Left-Wing leadership have been won in quite a number of locals. This weakness is shown nationally, and is also reflected in the weaknesses of the united front approach to the socialist workers and the socialist local organizations.

In connection with the united front, there are to be observed also serious opportunist deviations. First, a deviation that was more general since for the most part the united front gatherings embraced, as far as organizations were concerned, primarily the organizations sympathetic to the Party, although they gathered wide non-Party masses around them. This deviation took the form in some districts of issuing all literature, all leaflets, in the name of the so-called "United Front Committee", while little if any literature was issued directly by the Party. This, of course, was not the case everywhere. In New York City large quantities of agitation and propaganda material were issued by the Party. This was true in many other cities. But there were also many cases where this was not done. What was the result? The Party was not sufficiently brought forward, except through the Party speakers. But in addition, in the united front literature the slogans and agitation were limited to the immediate demands, while the Party had little if any material printed in which the revolutionary objectives and slogans of the Party were brought forward, especially in connection with the fight for Soviet Power. There were also cases, although isolated, where the Party organizations entered into united fronts on the basis of the Party giving up the right to its own banners, and upon agreement of no criticism of the social-fascists at the May Day demonstrations (Allentown united front with the Musteites).

Another weakness that must be overcome is the tendency to consider and organize the May Day preparations as something divorced from the every-day activity of the Party. It is this conception of May Day which caused some of the local organizations to look upon May Day as a campaign which hampers the daily activities of the Party, instead of seeing in May Day a means to rally the masses on the basis of the activities in the strikes, among the unemployed, in the fight for the Negro masses, etc. In this connection we must state that both the preparation and the May Day demonstrations themselves were not fully utilized for recruiting workers into the Party.

An outstanding shortcoming in the May Day demonstrations, which was especially reflected in New York City, was the relatively small numbers of Negro workers who participated in these demonstrations. How is this to be explained, especially in the face of the fact that our Party has taken the lead in the struggle for Negro

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rights, has organized the tremendous movement for the freedom of the Scottsboro boys, etc.? Here more than anywhere else we can see the connection of the May Day demonstrations and our every-day work, both its positive and negative sides. Undoubtedly we have won tremendous influence among the Negro masses as a result of the struggles we have conducted. But the Negro workers still see a tremendous discrepancy between our general struggle for Negro rights and the daily struggle for the economic needs and against political reaction against the Negro masses. They do not see that in the factories, in the trade unions, and among the unemployed, we take up sufficiently the fight for their needs, against the vicious discrimination to which they are being subjected from all sides. Furthermore, because we have not yet adequately taken up this struggle in defense of the daily needs of the Negro workers, we have been unable to bring them in sufficient numbers into the T.U.U.L. unions, into the Unemployment Councils. Because we have not yet learned how to combine the fight for the Scottsboro boys with the fight against the daily oppression to which the Negro workers are subjected, we have not yet been able to bring them in sufficient numbers into the L.S.N.R. and the I.L.D. Also the Negro workers do not yet see sufficiently that the white workers take up the struggle for their needs. *Those Negro masses that we have organized in our organizations did participate in the parade and demonstration.* We have not yet reached the masses of the Negro workers with the Left-Wing organizations. Side by side with this intolerable situation we witness the increasing activity of the Negro reformists and the social-fascists in general among the Negro workers. The weakness revealed in the May Day demonstrations will be overcome only if a decided change is made in the whole work of winning the Negro masses on the basis of the struggle for their every-day needs, upon which basis alone they will join the Left-Wing organizations.

To certain extent the same situation was reflected with regard to all workers. Large sections of the workers in all cities came to witness our parades, stood on the sidewalks, applauding the parade, but they did not join it. Why not? Because since the parade was made up for the most part of workers through their organizations and banners, these workers who were not organized did not see how they could participate. In the organization of the parades and demonstrations we did not give serious attention to this problem. Most of these masses were unemployed since they were out in the streets during the day. But they were not organized in the Unemployment Councils or any other Left-Wing organizations. This could be seen in New York City. Here hundreds of thousands were

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on the streets. Here also the Unemployment Councils are relatively the weakest in the country.

The May Day events, clearly showing the rapid radicalization taking place among the workers, the growing readiness of the masses to follow our revolutionary slogans, do not require that we set before ourselves new tasks. They only confirm the correctness of the Open Letter and the Resolutions adopted by the Eighth Convention of our Party, both with regards to the situation among the workers and to our tasks. The developments since May Day, the growth and the militant character of the strike struggles, the growing disillusionment with the N.R.A., the growing terror against the workers, the fact that the socialist and A. F. of L. leaders are making haste to carry through some additional "Left" maneuvers in order to try to prevent the masses from entering the path of the revolutionary class struggle, but again emphasize the correctness of the line of the Party. The May Day events, however, throw additional light on the urgency for a more rapid tempo in carrying through the tasks laid down in the Open Letter and the Party Convention. Above all, they show, first, that larger and larger strata of the workers are ready to fight for their daily needs, are beginnng to ask the question as to which is the way out from the misery and reaction which capitalism means to them. *We must supply the answer, by increasing our activity to lead these masses in struggle against the attacks of capital on the basis of the fighting united front, and more boldly bring forward the revolutionary way out of the crisis as the only road for the masses to follow.*

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Some Problems in Our Trade Union Work

By JACK STACHEL

THE Eighth Party Convention stressed for the whole Party, in line with the recent decisions of the Communist International, the fact that the economic struggles are today the link through which we can develop the revolutionary struggle of the American working class. In this respect the Convention instructed the Central Committee to make a check-up and to report within three months after the Convention on our success in drawing in every Party member eligible for trade unions into a trade union. This task will be undertaken through articles in the press and through meetings. In that connection we shall also stress the building of the fractions and their role. As for the relation of Party and trade union work, we know that even as late as 1934 we still have tendencies in our Party to put the Party in one pocket and the trade union in another pocket, and some of our comrades have a pocket for only one and not for the other.

We must understand that our Party is changing, rapidly changing. Some of us may have discussed this question three years ago and may feel it is finished; but the Party does not know all about it, and the working masses around the Party do not know all about it. That phase of our enlightenment on this question must be brought, not only among the Party members, but even to the masses in the trade unions, from whom we have nothing to hide. On the contrary, we are in duty bound to explain the role of our Party in the struggle and to expose all fear of the "Red scare", brought in by the enemy under the guise of neutrality.

How can we solve this question and where do we meet it most? Well, let us start with the factory. We have had comrades who even formulated this wrong policy in a document at one time. About two years ago, in the New York District, a comrade who was at that time the organizer of the Trade Union Unity League, Comrade Zack, wrote a document in which he developed the theory that in the relation of Party and union work, we must go according to stages. He had four stages. You go into a factory—the first stage—to make contact with the workers. When you get finished with that, you chalk that off and you go to the second stage: you try to develop some small struggles. Then you come to the third

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stage: you lead a mass struggle. After that is over successfully, you go to the fouth stage: you consolidate yourself and then you are ready to go and talk Party, but not before. Why such a theory? Because, the answer will be given, the American working class is backward. If you come at once with the Party they will be afraid, so do not frighten them, fool them. First rope them in, and when you get them, then take them. The only trouble with that policy—if it could be worked, and it can't be worked—would be the following. At the meeting once when Zack's document was read, someone got up and said, "Yes, Comrade Zack, but unless we have the Party in the first, second and third stages, we lose the struggle and we cannot build anything." What has been our experience in the last few years, in the past year of big struggles?

We have led many struggles and strikes in some places. We were defeated precisely because we were not able to rally the workers solidly enough politically on issues of class struggle, against class collaboration, against reformism, against arbitration, to defeat the A. F. of L. bureaucrats and all the attacks of the company; because we did not have—inside the shop—a corps of comrades with a program and a policy and unity among themselves in carrying out this program, who could by their example unite all the workers in the shop. We were even able to consolidate a mass organization of thousands when everything was nice and peaceful, but when the big attack of the bosses came (Ambridge is a case in point), we were crushed. Why? Because we had nothing on which to hang. We had no Party, no steel rod to hold up the whole situation. This emphasizes, first, that without work in the factories we cannot build trade unions and without bringing forward and building the Party in the factories, we cannot build a lasting organization to withstand the full attack of the enemy, the capitalists, the A. F. of L. bureaucrats, the socialists, and the government. If we approach this question properly, many other questions will be solved; the relation of the fraction to the Party units will be solved, because if you build a nucleus in a factory and you build your union in the factory as a local, you have at the same time your fraction there which guides the work.

What is the present situation in regard to our trade union policy? We can observe in the past, as already emphasized in our Convention documents: (1) Growth of militant strikes; (2) Growth of the trade unions.

In regard to the trade unions, we have, first, the growth of the A. F. of L. unions in some industries for the first time, as in

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the automobile industry; in others for the first time in more than 12 or 15 years, as in steel. In general there has been a substantial growth of the A. F. of L. It is true that the A. F. of L. Executive Council, which is now meeting, will announce that their total gains since last year are 450,000, which will express only the per capita in Mr. Green's office, because they have the same problem that we have; they have members who do not pay dues. There are many industries, such as steel and automobile, where the workers are not willing just to pay dues because they see no struggle. They joined the A. F. of L. expecting struggles. Where they have per capita is where they have shop control, as in dress and coal.

Secondly, a new factor in the development of this country has been a relatively important growth of independent unions in the last few months—in mining (a split from the old U.M.W.A.), in the auto industry, among the tool and die workers, among the shoe workers, in textiles, and the like.

Thirdly, there has been an increase in the membership of the T.U.U.L. Side by side with this we can record the growth of the opposition movement in the A. F. of L. and the growth of a whole series of difficulties for the A. F. of L. bureaucracy on such questions as the N.R.A., craft or industrial unionism, high initiation fees, and the like.

In the light of this situation what should be our trade union policy? Some comrades would say that nothing has happened and nothing should bother us; we should just go along as we did. Comrade Zack, for example, was the only one in the whole Convention who voted against the trade union resolution of the Party. This shows how united the Party is, but also shows how wrong Zack is. Comrade Zack wrote an article in the April issue of *The Communist*, stating that independent unions grew, that T.U.U.L. unions grew, that oppositions grew, but he does not see that the A. F. of L. has grown. He says: "The greatest event in my opinion . . . of the last year is the growth of independent trade union organization outside of the A. F. of L., comprising about three hundred thousand workers". Then he says that the second important thing in this country, "Another event of enormous significance and equal importance is the militancy displayed by the masses organized into the A. F. of L."

Well and good, but in no place does he see the significance of the fact that for the first time since the post-war period there is a growth of the A. F. of L. unions; he does not see the policy of the bourgeoisie which is promoting them side by side with the company unions. Such an analysis must lead to a wrong policy. Is there need for more important work in the A. F. of L., according to his

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analysis? Of course not. On the contrary, he thinks we should run quickly out of the A. F. of L. The Party Resolution, however, states that any underestimation of work in the A. F. of L. cannot be tolerated.

On the other hand, there are some gentlemen who believe that the growth of the A. F. of L. settles everything, that the only thing left to do is to take the independent unions, to take the T.U.U.L. unions, and force them into the A. F. of L. Mr. Lovestone has just written an article in the May issue of the *Modern Monthly*. You do not have to buy it to read, because it says nothing that was not said in 1929; it is based exactly an an article written by John Pepper in 1928-29. That means that Lovestone is evidently not learning very much, although he is learning how to make new company as the May Day march shows, evidently company where he belongs and feels quite at home. Well, we reject this policy with equal force. Of course, the Trotzkyites have a different policy. Mr. Cannon, the Trotzkyite leader in the United States, has just written an article in the *Militant* attacking Lovestone for his wrong policy in the furrier situation. What did Lovestone propose in this situation? That the Joint Council of the A. F. of L. become the real union. Cannon says, "You are wrong". But what does he think should be done? He admits that the T.U.U.L. is the only fighting union and, he says, the T.U.U.L. union should apply to the A. F. of L. to join and unite with the other leaders!

What is our position? We can see that the A. F. of L. has become tremendously more important than ever before. We might say that even two years ago we underestimated the work, which was wrong, but today to underestimate it is suicide. For, hundreds of thousands have joined the A. F. of L., and done so in the basic industries—mining, steel, textile, automobile, longshore, garment, oil. Secondly, the influence that these workers have in the factories, even where they are not yet a majority, also has an important effect upon the rest of the workers. The A. F. of L. may have 800 members out of 2,000 in an automobile plant, but it does not mean that the 800 during a struggle do not affect the other 1,200. Therefore, it would be foolish to judge only by numbers, although we should take them into account. The Party emphasizes, therefore, that our basic task is to win these millions in the A. F. of L. Without that we cannot talk seriously about winning the majority of the American working class to our Party program of struggle.

Secondly, we must shift our main work in the A. F. of L., more and more, along the whole line of the Party concentration program in the basic industries. Without neglecting the building trades and needle trades, more attention must be paid to mining,

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steel, automobile, longshore, oil, and the like. In certain industries our main task is work in the A. F. of L.: as in mining, where 80 per cent of the workers are organized; in building, where they are the only mass unions, and where there are no revolutionary unions of any consequence outside of some small unions in New York; in railroads, where the reformist unions are dominant, and in the largest sections of the more privileged workers in the printing trades. In these sections they have become increasingly important and you cannot talk about any struggle in the factories or any building of T.U.U.L. unions without serious work in the A. F. of L., such as the textile, steel, automobile and needle industries. We also recognize the new factor, the growth of the independent unions, which number between 200,000 and 250,000 throughout the country, particularly in the shoe, mining, food, automobile, textile and metal industries, including such important industries as shipbuilding, airplane and taxi; and among many white-collar organizations, like postal workers.

There also we must work and win these workers for our program of struggle. Does this mean that we are giving up building the T.U.U.L. unions? On the contrary, we utilize every possibility in this increased radicalization of the masses to build the T.U.U.L. unions. In certain industries, the T.U.U.L. unions are dominant, as among the seamen, among the agricultural workers, among the lumbermen and fishermen. Here they are the only unions carrying on struggle. In some light and heavy industries they have established themselves, as in the needle, furniture, food, steel and metal industries. Some of our other unions have not grown and are extremely weak. In mining, the main task has become work in the U.M.W.A. In the textile industry, where the independent and A. F. of L. unions have grown tremendously; and in the automobile industry, where our union is numerically not strong but has influence, but where lately tens of thousands have been organized into the A. F. of L. and other thousands in the tool and die makers' organization, we must, while making the most serious efforts to build the T.U.U.L. unions, give maximum attention to work in these A. F. of L. and independent unions.

In each case we must weigh what should be our tactics, where we must throw the main weight: in the A. F. of L., or in building the T.U.U.L. or independent unions. But in each case our aim is the same—to make contact with the masses, to lead in struggle, gain influence, consolidate this influence among the masses, on the basis of work in the factories in the first place—and to crystallize a revolutionary trade union movement among these workers, which

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may consist of T.U.U.L. unions, of oppositions in the A. F. of L. unions or independent unions, or of independent class trade unions.

However, this whole question raises another question which the Party is trying to answer now; and that is the following: Can we look forward to a situation where there may develop simultaneously, as we have already, an A. F. of L. center, a T.U.U.L., and a new center of the independent unions, which already number more than the T.U.U.L. unions? Or if we do not like that, can we take these workers in the independent unions and ask them to join the T.U.U.L.? Yes, we can, but the trouble is they would not do this so easily. And they would not join the A. F. of L. because these workers who enter independent unions in the main, are workers who are already more radicalized than the workers in the A. F. of L., workers who either split from the A. F. of L. because they disagreed with the policy of the bureaucrats or who refused to join because they did not agree with the policies and tactics, the dues system, etc. At the same time, in the main, they are workers who are a little afraid of even the T.U.U.L. In some cases it is due to bad work of our unions, but not always. And we cannot just make up a prescription that they must join the T.U.U.L. We can try to win them. That is the question—how to win them? If we leave these workers alone, what way will they go?

Many of these unions, isolated, will be destroyed because they will not be able to resist the attacks of the enemies—the A. F. of L., the government, the S.P. and others. Corrupt elements will gain headway and destroy them from within, and most likely even affiliate them with the A. F. of L. There is another prospect. That the "Left" reformist elements—not only Muste but others of that type—will try to bring these workers into a new center, fooling these workers by saying: "We will help you, with neither Green nor Foster to come in between".

Basing ourselves on the idea, which is correct, that these masses in the independent unions—even though dominated by reformists—are more Left than the A. F. of L. and are willing to unite for struggle, it is our duty to win these workers over and to fuse them with the workers in the T.U.U.L. unions, who are even more advanced. And what will be the result? Here is something which we must remember. When you mix the revolutionary workers with these workers what will happen? Will the workers in the T.U.U.L. become less revolutionary? No. The other workers will become more revolutionary, because they will learn by experience and contact with our workers. In other words, there is nothing to fear from the revolutionary workers; but we can hope that these now backward workers, who are willing to fight, will come in closer contact

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with our members and leadership and will become more revolutionary. Our policy must be one that will lead to the formation in the United States of an independent federation of labor, uniting all these workers outside of the A. F. of L. How shall we achieve that? Some may think, by calling a T.U.U.L. Convention, where, by changing our name and our constitution, we shall get them all to flock in. We may paint the house different, but it won't work like that. Others may think that all we have to do is to send a call to all the unions, to all the leaders, and form an organization. That is impossible. With Mr. Matthew Smith who exposes Left-Wing elements, and Mr. Pearcy of the P.M.A. we will not unite. What have we in mind where we speak of a labor federation? We have in mind that it would be not a new T.U.U.L. with a different name. We have in mind that it would be an elementary class struggle union federation, but at the same time not a new A. F. of L. The workers have one A. F. of L., and that is too much. Therefore, such a center can be built only through struggle, through winning the workers in these independent unions to a more conscious class policy and isolating these leaders who are reformists in these unions.

We propose certain concrete measures. For example, we propose wherever possible (we have in mind New York, Philadelphia, Connecticut, upstate New York, Jamestown) to bring together, at least in loose formation, most of the independent unions jointly with the T.U.U.L. unions on the basis of struggle around certain questions, issues, and demands about which they all feel in common—the attack of the A. F. of L., the attack of the employers, company unions, and the like—and gradually lead them into one organization. We have in mind, if we succeed in New York, for example, the possibility of unifying the T.U.U.L. organization with the independent unions, such as the Amalgamated Food Workers, the taxi workers, shoe workers, independent building trades unions, into an independent union council, together with various white-collar organizations and many small organizations that may exist, which may bring in some 80,000 to 100,000 workers. Such a federation will not only yield results in uniting young groups into independent T.U.U.L. unions, it will stimulate activity among the unorganized who do not know where to turn and will see in this an expression of what they wanted, an incentive to go into action and organization. If we can form such a center in New York we also have a possibility in Camden, Connecticut, Jamestown and other centers where we control or have influence in a number of independent unions. Let me also mention that the socialists, especially the so-called "Lefts", have taken hold of a number of independent unions, as for example, in Camden, N. J., and Gardner, Mass. In

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these unions which they go into or even organize, their aim to to block our leadership and carry through their reformist policy.

What we have in mind is that one or two of the important independent unions, together with the "New York Central Labor Union" which we can build, and a number of outstanding T.U.U.L. unions, would come together and issue a call for such a convention to form one federation, but that would not be the convention of the federation. It would go in resolution form to every independent union and local of the T.U.U.L. It would lay the basis for the real fight—against the Zimmermans and the other such controlling elements in the shoe unions—through a referendum of the membership for such a federation. We would demand a special convention of the Progressive Miners, where we would carry through such a policy. Such a struggle is also possible in Detroit. In other words, it would be a fight, a struggle. It would take months, maybe longer. But no matter what the outcome, the masses would learn. The masses would move forward and we would march at the head of them

This raises another question concerning the A. F. of L. Comrade Zack also raises this question, and other people have raised this question. Well, if we build such a federation, would we not want more company, would we not tell all of our friends in the American Federation of Labor, "Why don't you come in and join us"? No, we would not do that. We'll say, "Live in the house of the enemy and put him out of the house". At least win the workers if you can't win the building. We do not want anyone to assume, neither our friends nor our enemies, that through the idea of building such a federation of labor, we aim to split the A. F. of L. unions or draw out the most militant workers from the A. F. of L., leaving the rest of the workers under the thumb of the bureaucrats. That would be an even more serious mistake of the type that we have made in the last years; we have made such mistakes, let us admit it. We have in many cases taken the Left-Wingers out, with many bad results. We have learned from it. The first mistake can be excused; but we should not repeat it.

Our conception, therefore, is that such a federation of labor would not solve the whole problem. The central task among the organized workers is to work among the millions in the A. F. of L. We have no conception that such a federation would at once gather millions—at best it would rally hundreds of thousands. It would be a force proportionately much greater, but the problems of the millions remain, the millions in the basic industries. *There* must be our main work, where these masses are, among the millions; *there* must be the problem of building the oppositions. Our per-

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spective, therefore, is not to draw the militants in the A. F. of L. out into the new federation, but rather the development in this country at one and the same time of a strong opposition movement in the A. F. of L. and a relatively strong independent federation of labor on a class struggle basis.

In the long run, will that lead in most industries to one union? Yes, that would be the tendency, because our main slogan is that we stand for unity, for one class-struggle union in every industry. This will be possible by isolating the reformist leaders in the unions, by isolating them in the struggle. Therefore, in the fight side by side with the new federation, it will be possible to unite all the workers, even those in the A. F. of L. in one union. Such can exist in New York in the knitgoods industry, where we may form one independent union of the three locals in the knitgoods industry. It is also possible in certain other sections of the country in various industries.

I have spoken against splitting off small groups in the A. F. of L. But does this mean that we do not foresee that a large section of A. F. of L. workers will join such an independent center? This will come especially from the so-called Federal Unions, of which are are very many today, and which the A. F. of L. is trying to crush rather than build because they challenge the A. F. of L. with their militancy and their industrial form of organization.

Among the workers in these locals three things take place: (1) They can defeat, disintegrate and abandon their organization and send their charters back, as happened in the automobile industry in New Jersey, in Chester, Pa., in the airplane factories and in the Sikorsky plant. (2) We have a strong militant opposition, conducting militant struggle, such as in Kenosha, in the automobile industry, and among the cleaners and dyers in Philadelphia. (3) There is another possibility, such as in Hartford, in the airplane plants, where the workers wanted to liquidate their organizations, but because of our timely participation, we were able to help them build an independent union of 2,500 members, which is now taking steps to unite the airplane industry everywhere.

Therefore, we see the possibility that these workers, betrayed, will come in and that we will work with them. The test in each case will be: Will such a policy hinder or help in the development of the revolutionization of the workers? If we are confronted with a big national union, like the miners' or cloakmakers' union, and we split off a few groups, leaving the main mass, we weaken the struggle and help the bureaucrats. In the long run, we cannot keep these small groups. We keep the closest sympathizers and Communists; but we would have kept them no matter where they

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were, even in fascist unions. On the other hand, in the case of Federal local unions or larger groups of workers who want to split, to cut themselves from the bureaucrats—if that would mean developing the struggle, if a failure to bring them into the new center would mean to shatter them, then we would decide to bring them in. The policy, in each case, must lead to a broader development of the workers.

In our A. F. of L. work, which we must stress even more today, we must also bear in mind this: First, we cannot come to the workers with a negative policy, as some of our comrades try to do: "We will watch and let the others do the building." We must come in there sincerely to build the union, to fight the employers and the reformists who are their agents, to lead the workers and show them we are fighting for them and leading them. We want the union to be built for the workers and against the bureaucrats. On the other hand, while we want to participate in elections, utilizing every office, let us not become too legal-minded, as we tend to be in the A. F. of L. "We cannot do this or that"; "We are only in one local"; with the consequence that the workers fail to see the difference between our leadership and that of the bureaucrats. We are honest, our books are straight, but the workers' income is not increased. Why don't we fight for them? Some may answer, "Because we are finishers and not cutters". Why not build the shop group in each place and in each shop build the struggle? Developing the struggle and leading the workers in the shop is the main question: the fight for the unemployed, for the Negro masses in the reformist unions, shop organization, rank-and-file control, rank-and-file committees in strikes which we will have to set up over the heads of the bureaucrats—this we will have to do even though we do not control the offices.

Comrade Piatnitsky speaking only recently on the question, asked why we are so much worried that they may control the top offices. Supposing Dubinsky controls the top office, or Hillman? If we control the local organization and lead them in struggles so that these leaders are actually afraid to come to the masses and speak to them, let them control the offices with the aid of the government. We will have the masses in the decisive moment, we will lead the masses in the struggle, and not they—and against them. But this requires that we win the masses by fighting for them, by showing them how our methods are the only methods that lead to success.

In conclusion, a few words about the Party and the revolutionary way out of the crisis. Our enemies often say, wanting to pass compliments, that we are very honest people, we fight for the revolution—they give us credit for that. "But you have no desire

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to help the workers in their struggle for better conditions because you Communists think that if the workers improve their conditions, they would not want a revolution; therefore," they say, "the socialists would not be so good on the revolution, but they are good for advances today; the Communists will be strong for revolution, but not for improving the conditions today". In Haverhill that was the main cry of the employers. Politically, that is the cry of the employers. Our best answer is how we fight in the struggle. Without such an answer every other answer will fail. But we can explain to the workers theoretically, how it is that economic struggles become political struggles; that capitalism today is not in the stage at which it was years ago; that every economic struggle today, every victory for the workers weakens capitalism.

The socialists and the A. F. of L. leaders, starting with the idea of helping capitalism, cannot, of course, fight successfully for the workers' immediate needs. On the other hand, we Communists, who have no interest whatsoever in trying to save capitalism, do not mind a bit, if as a result of our being able to win the struggles of the workers, capitalism becomes weaker. That only proves that we are correct, that capitalism is no longer progressive, that it is reactionary. Even from this theoretical viewpoint it is clear that there is no division between the economic struggle today and the fight for power. The Comintern emphasizes that precisely today under the crisis, in order to develop the revolutionary struggle of the masses for power, it is necessary to lead the masses of workers in the struggle for their immediate economic interests. However, this does not mean that, left by themselves, the workers will automatically learn that they have to abolish capitalism, and how to do it. Our program must convince them of that. This requires proof, as we have stated in our Manifesto, of what we will offer the masses, in contrast to the lies and propaganda of the fascists and New Dealers. This requires gaining the confidence of the masses through struggle; it requires building the trade unions and other class organizations, and, above all, a mass Party in a big country like the United States, a mass Party of hundreds of thousands of workers of the factories and trade unions, to guide the workers, to win their confidence, lead them in the decisive battles against war, against fascism, for the defense of the Soviet Union and for power. This requires that our Party members, especially our comrades in the trade unions, endeavor to become Bolsheviks. Lenin pointed that out years ago in *What Is To Be Done,* which every Communist should read if he really wants to know the experience that the Bolsheviks had in that Party. Lenin declared:

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> "The Social-Democrat's* ideal should not be a trade union secretary, but *a tribune of the people*, able to react to every manifestation of tyranny and oppression, no matter where it takes place, no matter what stratum or class of the people it affects; he must be able to group all these manifestations into a single picture of police violence and capitalist exploitation; he must be able to take advantage of every petty event in order to explain his Socialist convictions and his Social-Democratic demands *to all*, in order to explain to *all* and every one the world historical significance of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat."

From this some comrades conclude that to do Party work is work of the first class, while doing trade union organization work is work of an inferior character, which makes them Party members of the second class.

Lenin did not mean that at all. Lenin simply meant that we should not become pitiful pure-and-simple trade unionists, but Bolsheviks in the trade unions, the main organizations of the masses; we should lead their work, become real Communists, develop our qualities as Bolsheviks in the factories, with the masses.

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* At the time Lenin wrote *What Is to Be Done* (1902) the Party's name was Russian Social-Democratic Labor Party; the term "Social-Democratic" therefore as used by Lenin should not be confused with its meaning at the present time.

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What Is to Be Expected of the Socialist Party Convention?

By MARTIN YOUNG

THE Socialist Party will not emerge from its Detroit convention as "the effective instrument for bringing about Socialism" hoped for by the Revolutionary Policy Committee. If any changes do take place it will be more to the Right, and more in harmony with the interests of American capitalism. The official resolutions of the various socialist state and city organizations indicate this. The political orientation of the S. P. for the next two years to be adopted by its convention, is outlined in the latest book of Norman Thomas, *The Choice Before Us*, which he advanced as "the socialist program".

Thomas did not endorse the program of the R.P.C. He rejected their proposals for the dictatorship of the proletariat, because "the party would sign its own death warrant by such a declaration". Nevertheless, he also finds some "merited points" in their program. Thomas doesn't want to disassociate himself completely from the "militants". He wants to be the unifying force and a bridge between the old guard, the Milwaukee cheap government socialists, the trade union bureaucracy and the "militants".

There is very little class content in the "socialist program" of Thomas. It is not by class interests that this program is guided, but by "national sentiment". The proletarian government is to be built, not along class lines, but along "national lines". The Socialist Party will no longer "limit their appeal and hope to wage workers, and to overall workers at that". "The progress of new technology" says Thomas "makes this section of the proletariat less rather than more important." From now on the S.P. will orientate itself to the "white collar workers", who "are becoming proportionally more numerous and more important in the economic scheme of things."

THE SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE NEW DEAL

It will be unnecessary for President Roosevelt to address the S.P. convention. Thomas sings enough praise in his "socialist program" to "the brilliant generalship" of Mr. Roosevelt. President Roosevelt, says Thomas "restored hope and confidence", he has "checked the disintegration of capitalism" in America, he has "driven the money changers out of the temple", he has "established control over the banks". The policies of the N.R.A., Thomas finds,

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have ". . . considerable measures of social idealism behind them". Roosevelt, the chief executive of American imperialism, is placed above classes, "the Roosevelt revolution tried to do right by everybody . . ." In face of the present government strike-breaking, Thomas says "the chief use of the N.R.A. to Labor was the encouragement it gave it to organize and bargain collectively". The inflation of the dollar is presented as a blessing to the workers. "It is certainly good" says Thomas "that the administration will take for the nation [!] the immense profits of its devaluation of gold." To top it all, Thomas says, that in this country today "the lowest sweat-shop wages are fairly well abolished".

It is not our purpose here to prove that these are lies. These lies are exposed daily over a wide front of raging strike struggles throughout the country. The question the Communist Party wants to place before every honest Socialist Party member, and the working class as a whole, is: how can a party with such a program, and such an estimation of the New Deal, fight the strike-breaking Roosevelt government and lead the struggles of the workers? In fact how can the workers be victorious so long as such capitalist agents, parading as "socialists", remain in their midst?

THE NEW DEAL—GATEWAY TO SOCIALISM!

The S.P. looks upon the New Deal not only as a gateway to Socialism. Thomas even says "Some of the machinery that we are getting under the New Deal will be useful for the easier achievement . . . of the co-operative commonwealth". What is this New Deal machinery? It is the strike-breaking Labor Board; it is the A.A.A., that drives tens of thousands of share-croppers and poor farmers off their land; it is the growing combination of trust and monopolies; it is the whole network of growing state bureaucracy. Does this machinery make it easier for the workers to achieve their goal? On the contrary, it only strengthens the dictatorship of monopoly capitalism and the dictatorial powers of the Roosevelt government. Thomas denies this. He says the powers of the President "were democratically granted and kept under sufficient democratic control".

Indeed, at no time has the S.P. placed so much faith in American capitalist democracy as it has done in the "socialist program" of Thomas. The New Deal, says Thomas, "gives one a new measure of faith in the possibility of leadership in a democracy". Consequently, the American "Socialists hope" that the workers in this country "may make genuine progress by clarifying the ideals and improving the methods of democracy and applying it to the economic as well as the political life". But what is there to "improve" in the ruthless

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American capitalist dictatorship known as "democracy"? It is precisely under the mask of saving the "democratic" institutions, that Roosevelt is carrying through increased violence against the workers, particularly the Negro workers, denying the right to strike and concentrating almost dictatorial powers in the hands of the President. In face of this, however, Thomas still hopes that the American workers may find "some meeting ground" with the capitalists in American "democracy and its institutions". At the same time Thomas has the audacity to indict "the folly of workers [not Socialist Party leaders] who put their trust in capitalist democracy".

The S.P. is not abstractly allying itself with capitalist democracy. The S.P. assumes actual defense of the capitalist State. Thomas deplores the growing disillusionment of the masses in Congress. He bemourns Congress because it is "made the whipping boy for the sins of government", and if this is continued he says "it may easily play into the hands of a dictator". Congress "can be manipulated by high pressure politics and certain interested groups". This is the "socialist" analysis of the class character of the United States Congress. This is "the worst that can be said for Congress" says Thomas. And what is "the best that can be said for Congress"? "In matters of social legislation, including taxation in the years 1919-33, it [Congress] has been more enlightened and done more to help and less to hurt the country than the executive or Supreme Court." The capitalist government is divided into a "good" Congress and a "bad" Supreme Court! In what does the helpful "social legislation of Congress" of the years 1919-1933 consist? Can the S.P. point out to the workers at least one act of Congress in their interests? This can only be said by a capitalist party parading as "Socialist" and trying to conceal the brutal class rule of the United States government.

We now ask every sincere S.P. member, how can such a party fight capitalism? How can such a party lead the struggle against the fascization of the American government? How can it fight fascism when it does not understand it, and misinterprets what fascism really is?

What does fascism look like in the "socialist program" of Norman Thomas? "The economics of fascism in practice" according to Thomas "is state capitalism". Fascism is not the rule of finance capital in its ugliest forms. Fascism, according to Thomas, does away with "old individual capitalism. . . . Severely limited under fascist rule is the personal power of a Krupp, a Stinnes, a Mellon or a Morgan." Thomas says a fascist program in the United States "would give cold shivers to an American Chamber of Commerce".

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Thomas is of the opinion that a fascist dictatorship would "not please Mr. Andrew Mellon". Consequently, if the Mellons, Morgans and the Chambers of Commerce are against fascism in the United States because it "limits their personal power", then why should the American workers fight the Mellons, Morgans and the Chambers of Commerce? Such is the inevitable logic of the "socialist program" of Norman Thomas. Then who are the promoters of fascism in this country, if not the big monopolies, trusts and banks? Not finance capital backs and promotes fascism, but "despite all the sincerity of Communist opposition to fascism the continued emphasis of its leaders upon dictatorship and violence plays into fascist hands." says Thomas.

No less amazing are the sections in Thomas' "socialist program" dealing with the road to power and the future state. Thomas improves and amplifies the long standing socialist views on this question. "Any effective capture and use of political power will require a drastic overhauling of our government machinery." As you see the government machinery will remain intact, it will only be "overhauled", as they were "overhauling" it in Germany and Austria. The American constitution—the class weapon of the American bourgeoisie—will not be abolished. It will be "amended" and this will give the workers "the best chance we have for peaceful progress in socialism". The future government will consist of a "single-chambered congress". The workers will elect directly one-third of this congress. Of course, the Socialist Party will also permit other "responsible political parties" to "make nominations both for geographic and occupational representatives". The working class will rule jointly with the capitalist parties.

BUYING OUT THE CAPITALISTS!

The reader may also want to know how capitalist ownership will be abolished? The "socialist program" of Thomas proposes that the workers buy out the American capitalists. Long-term bonds will be issued to pay the capitalists and gradually the workers will take over all the basic industries, natural resources, etc., etc. The reason that the workers must not confiscate capitalist-owned industries, Thomas says, is that this would be "threatening the little man" who has "an insurance policy and savings bank accounts". As if the confiscation of the capitalist-controlled industry and transport is directed primarily against the little man, who is already being expropriated by the trusts and monopolies.

This section of the program is crushed by the sheer weight of its own stupidity. Thomas himself implies he is not yet sure of the correctness of this program; it will "require much thought and possibly some experimentation."

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This sums up the position of the Socialist Party on the major questions facing the toiling people of this country.

The very experience of the class struggle in this and in other countries teaches us that the Socialist Party is attempting to lead the American working class where its brother parties led the German and Austrian working class. The Communist Party at its Eighth Convention said:

> "There is no way out of this crisis except by breaking the domination and rule of the monopolist capitalist class and taking the road pointed out by the victorious working class of the Soviet Union."

Day by day it becomes clearer that the Soviet road to power is the only road for the American working class to follow. And to this goal only the Communist Party can and will lead.

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The Imperialist Scramble in the Colombian-Peruvian Conflict

By MARINA LOPEZ

WHILE the League of Nations prates of a "peaceful" solution to the Leticia dispute between Colombia and Peru and the imperialists indulge in pompous talk of an arms embargo, the conflagration in South America spreads and threatens to involve the entire continent in bloody conflict. Along with the pacifist talk of the imperialists comes the greatest mobilization of contending forces that has yet taken place in the Bolivian-Paraguayan war over the Gran Chaco region. Despite all "peaceful solutions", the war situation between Colombia and Peru has become greatly aggravated and is leading to the development of a serious war in South America. Influenced by the intense contradictions between the imperialist robbers and based on local antagonisms and the desperate situation in which these countries find themselves, this developing war will be one in which the other South American countries cannot remain neutral. Armed encounters have already taken place in the regions of Guepi, El Encanto and Tarapaca. While Colombia and Peru seek to outdo each other in arming and preparing for the conflict, Brazil, itself the "mediator" and "pacifier", mobilizes and concentrates forces along the frontiers of Colombia and Peru. At the same time the danger of a war between Colombia and Venezuela grows more acute.

Colombia, a semi-colony of American imperialism, has been deeply affected by the world economic crisis. It has been hit especially by a disastrous decline in the prices of its principal products such as coffee, oil, platano, etc. This country is now in a virtual state of bankruptcy. Faced with a huge State debt and unable to pay its external debts, the bourgeois-landlord government seeks new loans from Wall Street. In spite of the mystery with which it tries to conceal its actions, the Colombian ruling class is making great concessions to Yankee imperialism in the hope of obtaining the desired loans. Sixty products exported by the United States have been exempted from duty and new laws have been passed which facilitate the exploitation of oil lands in the Catatumbo region by the Gulf Oil and other American companies. The organization of Colombian customs has been put in expert American hands and the "liberal" government of Alfonso Lopez would even like to turn over the administration and

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control of the national railroads to American companies (*N. Y. Times*, Feb. 29, 1934). Favorable also to American imperialism is the treaty concluded between Colombia and Venezuela which, through the abolition of customs tariffs between the region of Santander del Norte and Venezuela, opens up for conquest the markets of eastern Colombia. It offers, in addition, certain advantages to American oil interests and permits the introduction of Venezuelan cattle, chiefly American owned, into Colombia.

In its efforts to pay the imperialist piper and preserve its own interests, the Colombian ruling class has intensified its offensive against the standard of living of the proletariat and peasantry. Unemployment has greatly increased, wages in some cases have been slashed fifty per cent, and capitalist rationalization is more and more widely introduced. In Barranquilla, for example, workers who formerly operated four machines are now made to operate eight for the same salary.

Particularly severe is the feudal oppression of the peasant masses who are compelled to pay excessive taxes merely for the privilege of walking from one town to another by a footpath. This tax is called *las pisadas en la via*, literally, "stepping on the roadway". A tax must also be paid for the use of the roads to transport merchandise. In some regions of the country, the oil workers, miners and agricultural workers are paid only with vouchers of the imperialist companies (United Fruit, etc.).

THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT DEVELOPING

Pressed by conditions of intolerable exploitation, the masses are rapidly becoming radicalized and the revolutionary movement develops. Struggles and strikes, for the most part spontaneous, have sprung up among the railroad workers, marine workers, tailors and shoe workers. At the same time, struggles led by the Communist Party are increasing, such as that of the textile workers in Barranquilla, the dock workers in Cartagena and agricultural workers in Ibaqua. In the Obregon factory of Bogota, new strikes have broken out and there is the perspective of important strikes among the railroad workers as well as certain other sections of the working class.

The peasant masses are striking out against the system of feudal oppression and militantly resisting the plunder of the land of the poor and middle peasants and the expropriation of the indigenous masses by the bourgeois-landlords and the imperialist companies. In Santander the peons and expropriated peasants have risen up in arms against their exploiters and there is a growing number of guerilla fights in this region against the bourgeois-landlord groups and their armed forces.

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Whatever is not taken directly from the impoverished masses the government extracts in taxes. In addition to the numerous other taxes, there are two military levies called "military quota" and "national defense" which the masses are obliged to pay under penalty of going to prison. A poor peasant or a miner who works ten hours a day for a miserable wage is compelled to pay the same amount as the rich landlords. These military taxes have caused great discontent among the masses who are now beginning to resist payment, although their resistance has not yet taken an organized form. In Viota the peasants have refused to pay the tax.

Nor is everything quiet in the camp of the ruling class. Clashes between the various bourgeois-landlord groups are taking place, especially between the liberals and conservatives and the *Uniristas* (part of the liberals), as well as the diverse groups like the "Marxists", "socialists", etc., which, in spite of being more or less linked to the conservatives and liberals, represent the existing contradictions among them. These so-called Marxists try to gain influence among the masses by pretending to favor Communism—in other countries. Communism is impossible in Colombia, they contend, because of the climate and the situation of the country.

The commercial treaty with Venezuela, signed by the Olaya Herrera government, has created great dissatisfaction among certain groups and has done much to sharpen the contradictions between the opposing bourgeois-landlord factions. Especially are part of the landlords and cattlemen of the regions of Bolivar, Tolima and Valle opposed to the treaty because it seriously increases competition in the cattle trade.

The sharpening of the internal situation among the ruling classes and the struggle between the bourgeois-landlord parties (liberals and conservatives) for central power and concession, in which inter-imperialist contradictions undoubtedly play a part, has lately taken a very sharp form. In Santander, Aboledo, etc., armed encounters between bands of bourgeois-landlords have taken place. Some of these groups have attempted to draw the poor and middle peasants into the conflict, utilizing for this purpose the influence their parties have among the peasant masses. Parallel with the skirmishes of the bourgeois-landlord parties, a spontaneous movement of the workers and peasants is developing in Santander which the bourgeois-landlords are attempting to crush with the most brutal methods. Not only are armed forces sent against the struggling masses, but houses and entire villages are burned in the frantic attempt of the ruling class to stamp out rebellion. The village of Cinacota was completely destroyed.

The bourgeois-landlords in Santander del Norte have again

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revived the old question of the formation of an independent "Republic of Zulia" for which they would appropriate part of the territory of Venezuela. This "independence" would be highly profitable to Yankee imperialism. Through the acquisition of the Venezuelan territory, it would be possible for the Gulf Oil Company to construct oil pipes via Maracaibo (according to an unfulfilled clause in the treaty for the oil concession, the Gulf Oil Company is obliged to construct a pipe line in Colombian territory) saving in this manner some 200 million pesos. Of even greater importance, an independent "Republic of Zulia" would mean a second Panama, and there can be no question that Yankee imperialism will take steps to guarantee its control of this vantage point. In true lackey fashion, the Colombian Consul in Maracaibo, Leandro Cuberos Mino, has given himself over openly to the campaign for the Republic of Zulia.

Unlike the Bolivian-Paraguayan war, which is largely a contest between British and American oil interests, the sharpening conflict between Peru and Colombia and the preparations for war between Venezuela and Colombia are basically due to the internal situation in these countries. The bourgeois-landlord groups of Colombia, Peru and Venezuela are seeking through war a solution to the crisis and a way out of the difficult economic and political situation in which they find themselves. For the realization of these lofty aims, the exploiters place first on the order of business the question of crushing the revolutionary movement of the toiling masses.

While these conflicts and new wars spring chiefly from the conditions of crisis in the various countries concerned, inter-imperialist contradictions nevertheless play a considerable part in their development. These contradictions were greatly increased by the efforts of the Roosevelt government to set up at the Pan-American Conference means of combatting the Ottawa agreement, by which British imperialism tried to organize its forces for struggle against Yankee imperialism, especially in the markets of South America and the Caribbean. Here also American imperialism sought to make the Monroe Doctrine more palatable in order to defend the American continent against the invasion of Japanese imperialism. In spite of the fact, for instance, that Colombia, Peru and Venezuela are still economically dominated by and under the political control of the United States, the role of British imperialism is of no small importance. Even in Central America, where Yankee imperialism is unquestionably the dominant power, the bourgeois-landlord groups maneuver with British and Japanese imperialism which are trying to break down American hegemony in Central America. Panama, itself, completely in the hands of Yankee imperialism, threatens to

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bring its master before an international arbitration court to collect the $250,000 annual payment stipulated in the 1904 treaty on the Canal. British imperialism is able to take advantage of such a situation. In Cuba, where a Yankee-installed and controlled government holds power, where the American Ambassador, Jefferson Caffery, acts as chief organizer of the counter-revolution, and where the ruling class is faced with crisis and the danger of revolution, part of the bourgeois-landlord groups risks flirting with Japanese imperialism (accord between Cuba and Japan for the sale of Cuban sugar, the first shipment of which was sent in January). Through this tendency Japanese imperialism has been able to establish a base in the markets of Cuba, fortress of Wall Street.

When the conservatives were in power in Colombia, Great Britain was able to force the cancellation of the famous Barco concession made in 1905 to the Gulf Oil Company, which controlled 75 per cent of the oil interests. Yankee imperialism retaliated by putting its puppet, the "liberal" Olaya Herrera, in power, who obliged his benefactors by making a new contract for the Barco concession with the Colombian Petroleum Company (Colombian only in name) formed by the Gulf Oil Company and the Carib Syndicate, both American. There are also British and Dutch oil companies in Colombia such as the Dutch Shell and the Anglo-Persian Company which are seeking oil lands and which, although dwarfed beside the American companies there, represent a certain force. The Anglo-Persian Company holds a concession from the Colombian government for the absolute monopoly of vast oil lands near Panama for a term of 50 years.

British imperialism has created a coffee monopoly in Brazil which would serve, in the development of a war in which Colombia would participate, as an effective means of fighting against the coffee monopoly created in Colombia by the U.S., the chief consumer of coffee.

The imperialist scramble for control of Colombia and Venezuela assumes particular significance. Not only are these two countries important sources of raw materials, but they are also, because of their proximity to the Panama Canal, of special strategic value in the event of an imperialist war. Especially is this true of Colombia, which is the only country in South America facing on two oceans, the Atlantic and Pacific.

In the struggle for hegemony and conquest of the markets in South America, Yankee imperialism is not neglecting to strengthen itself in Peru where British imperialism has a strong foothold. Here the power of its British rival necessitates more polished methods of maneuvering. During his recent stay in Lima after the Montevideo

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Conference, Secretary of State Hull suavely declared that "no delegation was more capable nor of greater influence than that of Peru." This in spite of the fact that the Colombian representative, president-elect Alfonso Lopez, had so ably defended the interests of Wall Street and attacked British imperialism as to merit the open praise of American delegate Branden who stated: "Alfonso Lopez has faithfully defended the new policy of the United States", and "The delegation of the United States itself could not have expressed better the policy of the Roosevelt government."

The proposal for holding the next economic conference in Lima, Peru, and the declaration of Secretary Hull caused great annoyance among the bourgeois-landlord conservative groups in Colombia. *El Pais*, organ of the conservatives, bitterly protested the sympathetic attitude of the United States toward Peru, branding it "cruelty and ingratitude in view of the concessions Colombia has given the United States." (*New York Times*, Feb. 29.)

The Colombian-Peruvian and Colombian-Venezuelan conflicts are bringing to the surface a whole series of disputes on the question of litigation in the other countries of South America. Such disputes have arisen between Ecuador and Peru, Ecuador and Colombia, and Peru and Brazil (territory of Acre), etc.

Chauvinist propaganda, in both Colombia and Peru, is being whipped up by the bourgeois-landlords and the petty bourgeois officials. In Colombia the "unirista" Eliezer Gaitan tells the masses that "the cause of Colombia is just"; while Haya de la Torre, a Peruvian demagogue, valiantly defends the "justice of the Peruvian cause". The virtues of patriotism are sung with particular fervor to the petty bourgeoisie in preparation for war and for the ruthless crushing of the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants. Compulsory military education has been introduced in the universities and schools of Colombia, and a strict censorship clamped on the press. No comment is permitted on war activities or on the brutal terror against the revolutionary movement and the Communist Party, especially sharp in Santander, El Chocho, Viota and Nila.

Peasant struggles are drowned in blood, entire villages are burned by the bourgeois-landlord government, and hundreds of Communists and revolutionary workers are thrown into jail.

During the recent election campaign, the houses of workers suspected of having sympathy with the Communists were searched. The presidential candidate, Comrade Eulogio Timote, was indicted on the pretext of having taken part in a struggle of the indigenous masses against expropriation of their lands during which a police official was killed. The Communist councilman in Viota, Comrade

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Marchan, and another comrade, Arana, were condemned to forced labor in the penal colonies. The Communist councilman of Mendelin, Comrade Carrascal, is having proceedings brought against him for having voted against the appropriation of $100,000 for "national defense" and for having unmasked the war preparations of the government. But in spite of all the terror, the Communist Party of Colombia is carrying on a militant struggle against war and for the overthrow of the ruling classes.

Preparations for war in all these countries are being enormously speeded up. In Colombia, the efficiency of the army has been increased and a huge supply of war materials acquired with the funds collected through the "military quota" and "national defense" taxes. The Colombian government recently bought three cruisers from Italy in addition to trucks, airplanes, etc., and is now carrying on negotiations with a German house for the purchase of six warships. It is attempting to secure a new loan of ten million pesos and is launching an internal loan of thirteen million pesos without backing. An extensive program of preparation is under way which includes increased commercial navigation in the rivers in the south of the country and in the River Meta, the construction of roads and landing fields for airplanes, and the installation of powerful radio stations. More than three thousand men have been concentrated on the frontier of Venezuela. Chilean officers, artillery experts, have been contracted to instruct the Colombian army and thirteen Cuban aviators, former hirelings of the tyrant Machado, were recently engaged by the Colombian government. Nine American aviators have also been put at the service of the Colombian government.

Forced recruiting is now taking place in Colombia. This is carried out by "division of assault" in the villages, the plazas, the fields and even in the factories (Curtido factory in Bogota). In the meantime, "normal" recruiting goes on. The government has been compelled to resort to this new method because of certain resistance it has met on the part of the masses against participation in the war. A whole series of spontaneous movements of the masses is developing against the forced recruiting. In Tumeque and Tibana, the agricultural workers and peasants have not only resisted recruitment with their machetes, but have entered barracks and released many recruited before.

The Communist Parties of the Caribbean must prepare to meet the tasks pointed out in the Thirteenth Plenum of the Communist International to "mobilize the broadest masses for the struggle against war before the actual outbreak of conflicts, to direct the

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movement of the masses toward the struggle for the overthrow of the dictatorship of the exploiting classes". Only a Bolshevik struggle before war for the revolutionary way out can assure the victory of the revolution in the event of war.

The intensified war situation in South America places important tasks before the Communist Party of the United States. Our Party must increase its struggle against its own bourgeoisie and the maneuvers of the imperialists and seriously face the question of aiding the revolutionary movement in the colonies and semi-colonies, such as Colombia, under the domination of Yankee imperialism. An active link must be established between the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade unions of the United States and South America, in order to help the revolutionary movement in an active, practical and direct form. The toiling masses of the United States must be roused to actions of solidarity with their colonial and semi-colonial brothers.

Stop the shipment of munitions to South America!

Down with the united front of the imperialists and the native bourgeois-landlord class!

For the united front of the toiling masses of the United States and South America!

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Japan Bares Its Imperialist Sword

By G. M.

I. IN THE SNARES OF INTERNATIONAL CONTRADICTIONS

JAPANESE imperialism is trying to display speed and verve wherever it can. In this way it is counting on catching unawares, not only its rivals, but also its friends. The seizure of Manchuria and the easy victory in northern China gave wings to its hopes. At one blow it tried to achieve the dominating position in Shanghai. The barbarous destruction of Chapei served this aim. However, it was unable to carry it out. Japanese imperialism had to make a partial retreat, meeting the resistance of a number of imperialist powers who, among other things, were afraid of playing into the hands of the national unity of China and the Soviet movement. Japanese imperialism carried on its further play like a gambler staking all on one card, openly taking the line of provoking war against the U.S.S.R. Would it not be a masterly move to *unite a new partition and enslavement of China with a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union?* Such was the idea of Araki and Co. The partition of China, in their opinion, was bound to blunt the antagonism of imperialist interests and to set free the hands of Japanese imperialism. On the other hand, an attack on the Soviet Union, in the minds of Araki and Co., is bound to open the hearts and purses of the other imperialists, who fear the growth of the land of Socialism.

Hitler's coming to power brought the armed conflicts of imperialists in Europe dangerously close and cooled considerably the sympathy of the French bankers towards the adventure of the Japanese military clique. The role of organizer of the united imperialist front against the U.S.S.R. was taken by diehard England. The British diehards displayed an unfeigned desire to help the monarchy of the Mikado prepare a blow against the Soviet Union. Behind the scenes they urged Japan and Germany to draw together against the U.S.S.R. They hoped to play on the isolation of the American bourgeoisie in the sphere of foreign policy. But the consistent peace policy of the Socialist government upset their cards. Mikado Japan did not acquire much popularity with its shouts for the "unity of the civilized world against the accursed Bolsheviks"; while the destructive effect of its dumping on the other countries' industries, the rapidity and extent of its seizures in China, the menace of its sword to the entire world, compelled the other capitalist rob-

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bers to be on the alert; although each, in his own way, is moving toward a new world war for the imperialist division of the world, he does not wish to march under the orders of Japanese imperialism.

The upper ten thousand in Japan, without the slightest doubt, thought that by Spring, 1934, the sympathy of the capitalist world towards an attack on the Soviet Union would be so great that Araki and Co. would be able, without serious effort, to obtain the widest financial support for a war against the U.S.S.R. We should not forget what Lenin said at the Second Congress of the Communist International:

> ". . . [Japan] was able to plunder the eastern Asiatic countries but it cannot have any independent financial or military power without the support of another country. . . ."

Japanese imperialism waged the Russo-Japanese War in 1904, relying on the Anglo-Japanese alliance which guaranteed it financial aid and help in munitions, and which sheltered it from interference by the other great powers.

British imperialism has given some aid to the Japanese warmongers. It has carried out the Indo-Japanese trading agreement. It has formally half-recognized the puppet government of Manchukuo. It promises to encourage the fight against the U.S.S.R. in the future.

But this support is too scanty for Japanese imperialism to feel the firm ground of the old Anglo-Japanese alliance under its feet. It is orientating itself on a new Anglo-Japanese anti-Soviet alliance. The Minister of Finance, Takahashi, replying to questions on the financial measures of the U.S.A., in the Diet on March 8, 1934, had good reason to soothe the excited parliamentarians with the following characteristic statement: "*The pound sterling*, which fluctuates within comparatively small ranges, will furnish the standard by which to fix the purchase price of gold". In the struggle for financial hegemony between the London City and New York's Wall Street, the Japanese yen, the yen of dumping, chooses to seek the support of the City.

However, the hole in Japanese finances is getting bigger and wider. Every year the national debt rises one billion yen. Half the bank deposits are government paper issued to cover the deficit in the State budget. Financial collapse is hovering over the ruling classes of Japan, and evidently this is clearly realized by their well wishers. The French *Comité des Forges*, which has always been generous in its support of anti-Soviet adventures (in 1931-32 having almost promised to supply Japan with money for "assimilating" Manchuria and the *Soviet Maritime Provinces*) is at present financing fascism

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in France, and only gave 100,000 francs for "raising the productive forces of Manchukuo". The French cannon and aviation magnates—like their English colleagues—willingly accepted Japanese orders for tanks and bombing planes, but have no illusions regarding the financial stability of the Mikado's monarchy. In particular, the British diehard bourgeoisie are indignant that Japanese dumping, which is doing tremendous harm to British textile capital, serves as a means of strengthening the Japenese army and navy.

BRITISH-JAPANESE IMPERIALIST RIVALRIES

In addition, British imperialism which is impudently breaking into Szechwan, Yunnan and Sinkiang, and is strengthening its dominating influence in the south of China, realizes the instabilities and dangers of the uneven development of capitalism, in particular the instabilities and dangers of the uneven penetration of various imperialisms into China. The capital investments of Great Britain in China in 1902 comprised 33 per cent of all foreign investments, in 1914 they were 37.7 per cent and in 1931 they were 36.7 per cent, while Japanese capital investments rose by leaps: 1902—0.1 per cent; 1914—13.6 per cent; and 1931—35.1 per cent. (C. F. Remer, *Foreign Investments in China*, New York, 1933, p. 76.)

The fierce young bandit's energetic conduct causes the greatest uneasiness. Japanese exports jumped from 1,147,000,000 yen in 1931 to 1,861,000,000 yen in 1933. The increase in textile exports was still more rapid: from 757,800,000 yen in 1931 to 1,171,800,000 yen in 1933. British capital sees how Japanese imperialism everywhere squarely raises the question of a new repartition of the right to domination, a redistribution of slave-owners' privileges. In the first six months of 1931, 1932 and 1933, Holland accounted for 11 per cent, 8.6 per cent, and 5 per cent of the imports of the Dutch East Indies, its own colony. Japan's corresponding share was 12 per cent, 12 per cent, and 20 per cent. Japanese capital is trying to seize the oil fields of Borneo, which supply its navy with oil. The conclusion of a treaty between Great Britain and Holland, involving a British guarantee of the inviolability of the Dutch colonial possessions, shows that British imperialism is advising Araki, Hayashi, and Suetsugu, not to forget Britain's power.

Japanese imperialism retaliates in turn with plans to create its own first-class naval base in Siam alongside the British stronghold of Singapore.

The struggle for the partition and enslavement of China and the preparations for counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union are not taking place in empty space but in the conditions of the sharp, or even critical, intensification of *all* the impe-

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rialist contradictions in the most varied combinations. The struggle for world financial hegemony, the struggle for new capital exports to the colonies and dependent countries, the struggle for the division of the world in general and for domination in the Pacific in particular, are connected with the struggle for the partition of China and the preparations for an attack on the U.S.S.R. This not only complicates the entire international situation and makes it full of unexpected features and combinations, but also increases the instability of the international position of Japanese imperialism.

The "good-hearted" American bourgeoisie is absolutely beside itself when the fact of its military helplessness is flourished before its nose by the Japanese Arakis at every step. The cut-throats of Japanese imperialism, by their conduct, tell it: "Look! On the bedrock of your exceptional 'prosperity' you were unable to form a strong navy and fortified strategic positions in the Pacific. You waited until the crisis came and now you have to launch your belated warships under the N.R.A. flag. But now it's our turn. You keep your hands off! Over the shallow bog of dumping and war in China we have advanced to the first rank of claimants for world domination. The crisis has broken up the old relationship of forces which reflected the relations between the strength of the capitalists of the various countries more directly and plainly. *Now it is not diplomacy but war which decides.*"

Take the strident speech of the commander of the Japanese naval forces, Vice-Admiral Nobumasa Suetsugu. First of all he explains what Japanese imperialism understands by the maintenance of peace: "We fought the Sino-Japanese and Russo-Japanese wars for peace in the East. Through the maintenance of peace in the East we ensured the rise and progress of Japan." (*Trans-Pacific*, Jan. 25, 1934.) When the Japanese exploiters say "peace" it means "war"—it is impossible to speak more openly.

The brave Vice-Admiral Suetsugu spoke without any embarrassment of the possibility of an armed clash between Japan and the U.S.A. during the Japanese attack on Shanghai: "If it came to war, it was doubtful if the American navy could defeat the Japanese navy."

American imperialism at one time clearly overestimated the strength of its economic pressure. Even the Nanking government of the Kuomintang has recently been in fairly close contact with Japanese imperialism although for years American imperialism—behind its back—has been trying to "unite" China under its own hand. The United States never spared bombing planes and poison gas to help Chiang-Kai-shek against Soviet China. In helping the puppets of the bourgeois-landlord counter-revolution to crush and

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plunder the millions of the masses in China, American imperialism helped Japanese imperialism to become Nanking's chief counselor.

Long ago it tried to outdo the strength of the Japanese naval strategic positions, which block the approaches to the shores of China, by forming its own bases on these shores, especially for *aviation*. But the policy of American imperialism in China was rather crude and contradictory and it made it easier for the Japanese invaders of China to strengthen their position.

The same duality pervades the policy of the American bourgeoisie with respect to the U.S.S.R. On the one hand, American capital cannot help recognizing the growing strength of the Socialist State as an international factor for peace. On the other hand, American capital is stealthily encouraging the provoking of attacks by Japanese imperialism against the Soviet Union. Such a fight would weaken Japan, would tie up the U.S.S.R., and permit American capital to obtain war super-profits and speculate in the role of super-arbitrator. This is what is in the minds of many of the American bourgeoisie. And they encourage Suetsugu to shake his fist under the nose of the U.S.A.: "Put the cards on the table! Do you want China to unite around the existing Chinese Soviet Republic? Do you want the U.S.S.R. to become excessively strong, then why do you seek to counterbalance our naval superiority? Remember for the time being our navy is stronger than yours."

However, no matter how cowardly and doublefaced the position of the American capitalists is, Japanese imperialism feels that its balanced state between preparations for an immediate war against the U.S.S.R. and preparations for an armed conflict with the U.S.A. involving domination of China and the Pacific, forms the Achilles' heel of its international position. Japanese imperialism is acting like a juggler. It uses "Pan-Asiatism" and "the salvation of Western civilization from the Eastern barbarism of Bolshevism"; it appeals for a united imperialist front against the U.S.S.R. and the revolution in China. Its dumping has the character of collecting tribute from other capitalist countries for Japanese armaments. It applies diplomatic extortion with threats of military violence; it sinks to obsequious begging in search of financial aid from the pillars of the London City, Wall Street and the Paris banks.

The counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union occupies the center of all the plans.

The Japanese war-mongers unblushingly depict the seizure and enslavement of Manchuria as the first chapter of this war. "In the event of a Soviet-Japanese war, the Soviet could—until the Manchurian incident—face the Imperial Army with the entire region from Maritime Provinces to Harbin as their first line of defense, taking

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advantage of the Chinese Eastern Railway that extends as far as Changchun. This military vantage ground of the Soviets was practically destroyed, however, in favor of Japan, when the new state of Manchukuo came into existence. This means that once hostilities break out between Japan and Soviet Russia under the existing circumstances, the latter is in danger of having its *frontiers immediately crossed by the Japanese troops.*" (Ryo Nakahiro, Japan *Times*, Feb. 25, 1934.)

Getting a foretaste of this possibility of invading Soviet territory, the English mouthpiece in Tokyo states with self-satisfaction:

> "Considering the fact that commercial interest is prompt to demand a recognition of facts, there is no likelihood of recognition (of Manchukuo) being unduly delayed." (*Japan Weekly Chronicle*, March 15, 1934.)

Nevertheless, Japanese imperialism is far from sure of its own forces. It talks back and forth with Hitler, curries favor with the diehards, blackmails the American bourgeoisie, etc.

The extreme instability and contradictoriness of its international situation reduces the value of its anti-Soviet trump card. It tries to compensate for the insufficiency of its armaments and the shortcomings in its preparations for war with the help of its elder brothers "from the imperialist camp" and the intensification of its attack on foreign markets. But here it is faced by contradictions which arise from the close approach of a new epoch of revolutions and wars.

II. DUMPING AND PARASITIC SUPER-PROFITS

It is known that Japanese imperialism is a special kind of imperialism. Only in the middle of last century did the guns of the American Admiral Perry "open" the doors of Japan for relations with the capitalist world. At that time the country was so littered with the fragments of the rotting feudal past that scores of peasant revolts and plebeian movements in the towns failed to unseat the representatives of the old reactionary aristocracy. However, the turn towards capitalism was made on the shoulders of the crushed and enslaved masses. The government machine, seized by the speculators and business entrepreneurs from the ranks of the Samurai, was put at the service of their easy and rapid enrichment under the pretext of "encouraging capitalist progress". The country which only yesterday had been threatened by colonial seizure and national partition, proved to be, under the cloak of the monarchy of the Mikado, a united dictatorship of *parvenus* Samurai, speculators and their bourgeois allies. Japanese capitalism rose to the rank of a first rate imperialist power through war and colonial annexation. Its path was un-

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usual. It followed the steps of the last representatives of feudalism, copying them, adapting itself to them. It seized Korea and Formosa, and invaded China, utilizing all its military superiority. Within the country it preserved and cemented reactionary semi-feudal landlordism, dooming the masses of peasants to a dependent and slave-like position. It converted landlord exploitation into a prop supporting itself. The exploitation of the peasants' daughters, sold for a certain term to the manufacturers, produced the Japanese textile industry and its fabulous and predatory profits. Japanese capitalism made up for the shortage of mineral resources by annexations on the mainland of Asia and by sweating and bleeding the Japanese workers and peasants. Lenin wrote about this Japan and Czarist Russia:

> "In Japan and Russia there is a *monopoly of military force*, unbounded territory or *special conveniences for plundering colonials*, China, etc., which supplement and partly substitute the monopoly of modern finance capital."

This definition contains the key to the understanding of the essence, the internal content and the basis of Japanese imperialism, which came into being in an unusual manner, with a tremendous proportion of the feudal past intermixed with it.

The bourgeois economists were brought to an impasse by the staggering successes of Japanese dumping. They began to discourse at length on the "riddle of Japanese economics", etc. In realty, the source of the temporary and ostentatious "prosperity" of Japanese imperialism in the economic sphere is to be sought in its decay and parasitism and in the contradictions of world capitalism. The cheap goods of Japan already flooded the world once before—at the time of the first imperialist world war. Araki himself called this dumped trash "soulless commodities" because it gave Japanese industry a reputation as the supplier of all kinds of rubbish.

During the world imperialist war there took place a convulsive and extreme widening of Japanese capitalism's productive apparatus. It went far beyond the national limits, and when capitalist Europe returned to a peace footing, the productive apparatus of Japanese capitalism became a burden on itself. The home market together with the Japanese colonies could not support and nourish it. The foreign markets, however, were again chiefly in the hands of the first-rate imperialist powers. The war, moreover, had excited the appetites of Japan's financial sharks, who had grown fat on war contracts. The return to a peace situation disclosed the weak side of an imperialism that had been too late in coming into existence.

At the same time, with this return to a peace footing, there

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opened up a zone of convulsive struggle of the magnates of the Japanese financial oligarchy to save their inflated war super-profits and dividends. *Taxation robbery and government organized embezzlement of the public funds* (under the form of subsidies, relief and all other forms of putting their hands into the public pocket) in Japan for scores of years speeded up and strengthened the accumulation of capital. At the period of post-war development, the period of the general crisis of capitalism, this taxation plunder and robbery of the public funds on Japanese soil penetrated more than ever before into all the pores of government and economic life. The old feudal habits of the Samurais—not to hesitate to squeeze tribute out of the downtrodden masses of the people—made themselves felt here to their full extent and helped the financial firms, the steamship companies, the metallurgical firms, the chemical and aviation undertakings to make up for the losses suffered due to the contraction of the market by the extraordinary plunder of public funds.

At present the military-fascist leaders are hurling their thunders with regard to the venality and corruption of the political parties and parliamentarism in Japan. They carefully conceal that they themselves, together with the pseudo-parliamentary cliques and their patrons, are nourished by this pilfering of the public funds in which post-war capitalism in Japan especially has found its particular "national" safety valve.

At the same time the prolonged semi-stagnant condition of industry prepared the attack on the standards of living of the working class and the peasants. Not only as downtrodden taxpayers but also as the hired slaves of capital and serf-like tenants on the landlords' land, the workers and peasants of Japan had to carry on their shoulders the burden of the inflated productive apparatus which was working under capacity, or rather the *burden of the inflated profits and dividends of the factories working under capacity*. Whereas the annual production of a weaver in 1926 was 22,300 yards, in 1932 it had reached 51,300 yards. "It is not rare to see Japanese girls working on 20 looms." (*Manchester Guardian*, Nov. 10, 1933.)

In Japan capitalist hired slavery is supported by the rule of the semi-feudal usurer forms and methods of exploitation in the villages. These pre-capitalist relics are thickly planted around the capitalist factory where an unlimited economic absolute monarchy reigns under the name of "paternalism", where the working women are kept as prisoners in the famous factory barracks and where the wages are 15 to 20 yen a month.

Japanese dumping is bred by Japanese slavery and Japanese poverty. It is the dumping of cheap labor from a country which,

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being an imperialist great power, keeps the toilers of town and village in the situation of colonial pariahs. Japanese imperialism produced the prosperity of its financial oligarchy and the military and palace bureaucracy on this basis. For this basis, for this "historic" foundation, for its annexations—Korea, Formosa and Manchuria—it is struggling "against dangerous thoughts", against the influence of Bolshevism. This was frankly said by Hayashi, the successor of Araki, even before he took the post of War Minister.

The financial oligarchy in Japan, just as in any other imperialist country, represents the parasitic power of monopolist capital which has stretched out its threads to all the vital centers of national economy. It is sufficient to remember that 12 big banks, each with a capital of over 100,000,000 yen in 1926, had deposits to the sum of 3,630,225,000 yen or 41.3 per cent of the total sum of all the deposits of 6,522,000,000. Even in the period of the world economic of these 12 big banks reached 4,769,540,000 yen or 51.7 per cent of the total of all bank deposits. The five super-big banks out of these 12, namely, Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitmo, Yasudo and Daiti in 1927 owned 2,716,000,000 or 41.6 per cent of the total bank deposits of 6,522,000,000. Even in the period of the world economic crisis, in 1933, in the biggest industrial center of the country, Osaka, three big banks fused—No. 34, Yamaguchi and Konoike. The united Sanwa Bank exceeds in size the giants of finance capital Mitsui, Mitsubishi, etc. Its total deposits amount to 993,000,000 yen.

Recently figures were published in the Japanese press on the incomes of the pillars of the Japanese plutocracy:

> "As was the case formerly, Baron Hisaya Twazaki, a shareholder in Mitsubishi Goshi Kaisha, Takakimi Mitsui, and the chairman of Mitsui, Gomei Kaisha, stand at the head of the list of over 300 persons of various classes. These persons who have such a big influence on the business of the biggest firms of Japan, maintain their high position year after year in the financial world of the Empire. Their *annual income is estimated at* 6,000,000 *yen each.* Next come Baron Koyata Twazaki, the chairman of Mitsui Goshi, and Mr. Kikoyata Twazaki, partner in the same firm, with an income of about 5,000,000 each. The third place is taken by Genemon Mitsui, the chairman of the Mitsui and Motonosuke Mitsui bank, the vice-president of Mitsui Gomei; each of them receives 3,300,000 yen annually. The rest of the big ten plutocrats are Baron Takakiyo Mitsui, director of the Bank Mitsui Tashitaro Mitsui, working in Mitsui Gomei, with an income of 3,000,000 a year, and Baron Kishihoro Okuro, head of the firm Okura and Co., with an annual income of 2,500,000 yen. The next thirty on the list have an income of 1,000,000 to 2,000,000 a year." (*Japan Advertiser*, Feb. 17, 1934.)

The Minister of Finance Takahashi, speaking in the so-called Parliament said:

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> "In the last session of the Diet I expressed a desire for a tax increase from 1935 with a view to balancing the budget, but I did not express it definitely as a settled intention and I can say nothing definite now. They say that the munition industries that are profiting should be specially taxed, but my view is that the years 1935 and 1936 are really critical and the present is a preparatory period. Preparations require money, but at the same time we have to see that the purses of the people [!] should not be empty when the crisis really comes and requires a tax increase to meet it." (*Trans-Pacific*, Feb. 15, 1934.)

"Critical times" in Japan have become an umbrella for all weathers. The coming of this "crisis" in the form of a big war and very probably before 1935, is very enthusiastically entered by the financial sharks in the quotations of their bonds. "Critical times" serve as a shield for the police terror and the military-fascist attack. "Critical times" in the hands of the Japanese social-fascists of monarchist-police persuasion play the role of a bludgeon against class struggle, against resistance to fiercely attacking capital.

And simultaneously, "critical times" are a concealment and protection against taxation for the monstrous military and crisis superprofits of the magnates of finance capital.

THE SWORD OF SAMURAI AND THE MONEY-BAG

The Minister of the Mikado falls on his face before the bankers' millions. He is so humbly servile because in Japan the strength of the traditional armor of feudalism—the power of the monarchy of the Mikado, the strength of the influence of the court camarilla, bureaucrats and the reactionary military clique, the strength of landlordism—is all supported by the economic power of the financial oligarchy which feels itself to be unprotected without these accoutrements.

Through all modern Japanese history, the close connection of the sword of the Samurai and the moneybag stand out plainly. It would have been impossible to raise the super-profits of Japanese finance capital to such a disproportionately great height when it made its debut on the world stage as a late upstart without a firm support in a well developed heavy industry, if it had not been for the interference of the sword. The sword of the Samurai defended landlorism against the onslaught of peasant movements and supplied industry with cheap and downtrodden laborers from the villages. This same sword of the Samurai carried capitalist Japan on to the path of war, helped to subjugate Korea and Formosa and seized Chinese territory. Finally, the sword of the Samurai made the monarchy into the backbone of the organization and unity of the

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bourgeoisie and the landlords under aegis of the bureaucracy of the court and the army.

In Japan the power of the monarchy and the military fist do not form a simple appendage to bourgeois rule as, for example, in England. Here the elementary cleansing work of the bourgeois democratic revolution has not been done and not completed. And therefore the *monarchy and the military mailed fist* have in certain respects a self-sufficient significance, since they preserve the "historic advantages" of Japanese capitalism in the competitive struggle, as they serve as a *bridge between the feudal past, the relics of which in Japan show such vitality and economic and political strength, and the power of the most modern finance capital.*

The strivings towards extension, expansion, domination over all Asia, unite in Japan the entire camp of the exploiting classes because the bourgeoisie and landlords, together with the military and "civil" bureaucracy, are seeking on the foreign arena the way out of those contradictions which press on bourgeois-landlord Japan, rapidly shaking its traditional pillars. This modern bourgeois-landlord Japan is a hybrid born from the crossing of semi-feudal barbarism with capitalism, which, not having had time to mature, hastened to get over-ripe. This bourgeois-landlord Japan is torn, disorganized and exhausted by the contradictions between the inflated productive apparatus which nourishes the claims of finance capital for world domination, and the poverty-stricken condition of the home market, fettered owing to the pauper level of life of the vast majority of the toilers. One-quarter of the exports of this Japan consists of raw silk exacted from the peasants. The textiles produced by the hands of the enslaved textile workers form the greater part—1,171,800,000 out of 1,861,000,000. Japanese imperialism more than any other imperialism is sailing into the future on the floats of an *inflational war boom.*

But this has its limits, and the limit is in the restriction of the possibility of speculating with devaluated currency, the impossibility of an unlimited increase in the rate of exploitation of the Japanese worker who is already squeezed to the wall by poverty, the contraction of the sphere for dumping owing to the protective measures of other capitalist countries, the danger of financial bankruptcy, etc.

Beggars can use only beggars' products. This has become the rule of the modern fierce struggle of the capitalists for markets at the present day. Japanese capital has here passed the others because it proved to be better adapted than the others to the level of a market catering for paupers. But it sees that its good fortune will not last long. Highly concentrated monopolist capital, accustomed to rely on the "divine right" of the absolute monarchy and the semi-

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feudal military mailed fist, is thirsting to defend its monstrous super-profits at all costs. Dumping, the plundering of Manchuria and northern China, the huge gains derived from the preparation of a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, are all merely temporary palliatives. The way out should be sought by bringing new millions and tens of millions of colonial slaves into subjection under the heel of the Mikado, Araki, Mitsui and Mitsubishi, slaves who will have to be subjugated by the Japanese bayonet and who will have to supply cheap colonial raw material, the cheap labor of colonial coolies and a new widening of the market of colonial paupers at the expense of the subjugated peoples. Japan is to become a *new slave-owning Rome for colonial Asia.* Its fate proved to be the mission of becoming a slave-owning city-state of the colonial world, the "industrial workshop of Asia", the single state dominating Asia.

But can this be achieved when, side by side with enslaved Korea, stands the Soviet Far East, where Socialism is being victoriously built, where Bolshevik collective farms are being strengthened, where the new Soviet culture is awakening to life scores of formerly enslaved peoples.

Japanese imperialism is taking the line of war against the Soviet Union, because through war it seeks salvation from revolution in Japan. Araki, Hayashi, the bank magnates, the fertilizer kings, and the barons of cheap dumping, are acting in 1934 after the style of the Czarist minister Pleve, who thirty years ago provoked war against Japan, guided by the calculation that "Russia needs a bloodletting", because otherwise revolution was inevitable.

III. THE MILITARY-FASCIST OFFENSIVE ON THE BASIS OF THE WAR INFLATION BOOM

> "Supplied with large prospective appropriations under 1934-35 budget, the War and Navy Ministers are proceeding with joint plans to recruit 80,000 impoverished agriculturalists into munition works, thus aiding their condition and obtaining reserves of trained labor for mobilization in emergencies." (*Trans-Pacific*, Nov. 8, 1934.)

This was the statement recently published in the papers. The leaders of the military apparatus and the more or less open agitators of the military fascist movement are clearly trying to maintain their shaken authority which is being subjected to heavy blows, especially under the influence of the new and sharp intensification of the agrarian crisis. The harvest this year was much better than the previous year and had a surplus of about 15,000,000 koku (a koku is over four bushels). The surplus of rice available for the market is not in the hands of the peasant masses, who are starving in the

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presence of this abundance, but in the hands of the speculating landlords, the bourgeois cooperatives and the grain dealers. The buying up of rice by the government assists in bringing down prices, because the government does not pay in cash but in rice bonds. The overproduction of rice, not only in Japan itself but in the colonies under its rule, weighs down the market. These colonies are in such a slavish and downtrodden condition that the rice produced by them at the orders of the Japanese overlords cannot be consumed by them and is exported. Rice is an inaccessible luxury for them. The present consumption of rice in Korea, according to the admission of the Japanese papers, has fallen by 60 per cent since 1912, whereas the consumption of cheap Chinese millet during this period has increased by more than 50 per cent.

The deepening of the agrarian crisis showed that the source of all this (which cannot be eliminated under the rule of the capitalists and landlords) is, on the one hand, the ruin of the peasant masses of Japan by landlordism and finance capital, and on the other hand, the fact that Korea and Formosa are forced to play the role of an agrarian appendage for the supply of raw material to the dominating country.

The military-fascist gang, hiding behind the parasitic boom of the war industry and the shout about "critical times for the nation", was able for some time to conceal the increase of the taxation robbery of the masses of people for the purpose of carrying on the bandit war in China and preparing for the attacks on the U.S.S.R. But murder will out. The war expenditure has become so swollen that it has restricted the possibility of using the budget to help along even the exploiting strata of the villages, as represented by the medium landlords and kulaks, now in debt and on the way to ruin. To this should be added the "misfortune" of a good harvest. The parties of Seukai and Minseito, the corrupt political coterie of the stunted and powerless pseudo-parliamentarism of Japan, were able to raise their voices against the extreme appetites of the military clique and take some small revenge on them, throwing at them the accusation of ruining the villages, which hitherto the military clique has used as a trump card against these parties.

The deepening of the agrarian crisis and the darkening outlook for Japanese foreign trade, together with the extremely rapid intensification of the critical financial situation, compelled the fascist war-mongers to somewhat tone down their voices. However, Japanese political life is such a confused and contradictory tangle that we have no reason to believe these outward political indications. Without any doubt, the military-fascist movement in Japan, which comes forward under the flag of the military dictatorship for the sake of

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a rapid *military denouement* both in the struggle against China and in the struggle directed against the Soviet Union, in the course of its attack comes up against obstacles which it has to *get around*. The resignation of Araki, which changed nothing in essence, marked this turning point.

> "The national fervor, suddenly inflamed at the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese clash in Manchuria and fanned by the subsequent events such as the Shanghai incident or the discussions at the League of Nations, has gradually subsided after the settlement of the Shanghai affair, the restoration of order in Manchuria and the establishment of Manchukuo, the Japanese withdrawal from the League and an apparent recovery of prosperity in trade and in industry." (*Japan Times*, March 2, 1934.)

This is how Minakami explains the course of events in *Shakai Seisaku Tiho*. Every word of it is full of hypocrisy and deceit, deliberately calculated on putting vigilance to sleep. The Japanese fascist war-mongers are given a certificate of patriotic pacifism. The excited national feelings being pacified, it was only necessary for a bounteous rain of super-profits to pour onto the heated soil, and everything became "normal" once again.

Such explanations, which concealed the traces of the military-fascist offensive and the feverish war preparations, are scattered over the pages of the international bourgeois and social-fascist press.

What are the roots of the military-fascist movement in Japan and what is the nature of these roots? This is the fundamental question and the reply to it predetermines the estimate of the present situation.

It is self-evident that in a country which still remains an absolute monarchy and a country of all-pervading military, police and bureaucratic arbitrariness, fascism is distinguished by many peculiarities. It would be ridiculous here to seek for the center of gravity of the fascist movement in the strivings of finance capital to get rid of the cumbersome framework of parliamentarism.

> "The absolute monarchy which was formed in Japan after 1868 has maintained its full power in spite of all changes of policy", (states the Thesis of the West-European Bureau of the E.C.C.I.) "and has all the time increased its bureaucratic apparatus of coercion and oppression of the working masses. It based itself chiefly on the feudal-parasitic class of landlords, on the one hand, and on the rapacious bourgeoisie who were rapidly becoming wealthy, on the other hand. It was constantly in a close bloc with the upper ranks of these classes and represented the interests of these two classes in a fairly flexible manner. At the same time it maintained its independence, its relatively great role and its absolute character, only slightly concealed by pseudo-constitutional forms.
>
> " . . . The financial oligarchy became closely interwoven with the whole system of the bureaucratic monarchy which is carrying out its policy.

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> "The Japanese bourgeoisie increased and grew wealthy through the intense exploitation of the Japanese workers, the continual plunder of the peasants, military loot, the appropriating of state funds and the plundering of colonial peoples. Japanese capitalism developed under circumstances of military and police reaction and on the basis of feudal survivals in the country. The predominance of light industry is characteristic, above all the predominance of the textile industry, while metallurgy and particularly machine construction are comparatively weak. Having attained a high level of development, Japanese capitalism was and continues to be reactionary and monarchist." (*International Press Correspondence*, Vol. XII, No. 23, May 26, 1932; pages 467 and 468.)

The majority of the people of Japan have paid for the development of its capitalism, for the entrance of Japan into the ranks of imperialist powers, by long years of slavery, continuing capitalist exploitation and oppression with semi-feudal serfdom. At the top, at the helm of the government, under the shelter of the Mikado, the bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy together with the landlords came so near together and became so intimate because by *combining* their oppression they succeeded in converting the toiling masses into colonial pariahs, in *crushing* the masses with their economic, military and bureaucratic power. The bourgeois-democratic revolution in this country is behind time to such a degree that while moving toward it, the country became gripped in the vise of the general crisis of capitalism. The rice riots of 1918 were the first serious warning. The breakdown of anti-Soviet intervention in Siberia and the Far East seriously shook the position of the ruling classes and gave an impulse to a new revolutionary growth of the workers' movement and later to the formation of the Communist Party. It is characteristic that at the root of many fascist groupings, there is to be found this starting point of the "struggle against Bolshevism". It was precisely the October Revolution which most decisively shook the pillars of imperialist domination over the colonies, over the backward and dependent peoples, and struck a blow at that "monopoly of military force, the special convenience of plundering China, etc." which in Japan serves as the *cornerstone* of the entire reactionary monarchist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the higher strata of the landlords. In the face of the growing "Bolshevik menave", the ruling classes were compelled to adopt new methods of struggle to win the masses, first of all the masses of the petty-bourgeois population which had begun to grow active under the influence of the example of the proletariat. The parliamentary parties in Japan were incapable of bringing any considerable masses into their ranks, both in view of their origin, their composition and the character of their activity. The two-party system in Japan was by no means the reflection of the parliamentary struggle for power of the two

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camps of the ruling classes. It was and is an auxiliary weapon of the absolute monarchy and reactionary monarchist capitalism. This auxiliary weapon was needed by the monarchy and the exploiting classes not so much for the purpose of sowing "constitutional illusions" as for regulating the inter-relations between the various groups in the upper ranks of the bourgeoisie, the bureaucracy and the landlords, and for guaranteeing the proper share in the "respectable" incomes from tax robbery, subsidies, embezzlement and graft.

It was not difficult for Japanese fascism to utilize this servile and provokingly anti-popular character of the Seiyukai and Minseito parties to put itself in the role of the "saviour of the monarchy and the fatherland" from the stingy corruption of Japanese pseudo-parliamentarism.

From 1929 to 1931 the economic crisis developed in Japan more or less on an analogy with other capitalist countries though with a series of substantial variations determined by the peculiarities of its economics. These peculiar variations were that: (1) in Japan the industrial crisis was intensified to an extreme degree by the crisis of agriculture, which was declining as the result of the unbearable domination of semi-feudal landlordism and its inability to adapt itself to the changed conditions of competition on the world market; (2) the downward movement of the social structure in Japan had a specially sharp and destructive character owing to the fact that the economic crisis seized Japanese industry and trade even when there existed an *extraordinarily varied and confused interweaving of modern capitalist forms with backward and hybrid forms of hand manufacture, home industry, small handicrafts and small trading*. The crisis caused an increase in the indebtedness of the peasant masses and the separation of the peasants from the land, and caused a general worsening in the position of the toiling peasants to the point of mass starvation. On the other hand, the crisis of landlords' property values increased their indebtedness. At the same time, hundreds of thousands of small business men who found nourishment in the pores of the industrial system and in its backyard were ruined. Monopolist capital took advantage of the devastation of the crisis to get rid of numerous semi-medieval appendages and to grow at their expense.

Meanwhile, even as early as in Autumn, 1931, bourgeois-landlord Japan bared its imperialist sword. The annexationist war, with the prospects of its further growth into a big counter-revolutionary war against the country of the victorious Five-Year Plan, came to save the exploiting classes, and at the same time the mass discontent of the workers, peasants and urban poor increased enor-

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mously and began to come to the surface. At the same time a fissure opened up in the *bourgeois-landlord bloc*, a difference became evident between the *power of the possessing upper strata* of the exploiting classs and the "masses" of small and middle capitalists and landlords. The time for the military-fascist movement had now come. And the black hundreds of the old type, the banner bearers of military-feudal imperialism, worried about the future of the monarchy, the army and navy, and also the fascists of the latest Japanese pattern, the advocates of the Pan-Asiatic mission of Japanese imperialism, opened up the front of their offensive. The "rightful" representatives of the financial oligarchy went beyond all bounds. They lost the sense of proportion. They forgot that speculation on the bankruptcy of landlordism undermines the very basis of bourgeois-landlord class domination. They forgot that for an aggressive and annexationist war of conquest it was necessary to have the "unity of the nation" and that the "unity of the nation" requires the ability to draw to their side the exploiting upper strata of the villages and the upper ranks of the urban petty-bourgeoisie, who become inflamed very easily in the conditions of crisis. It was precisely this which sounded in the shots of the military-fascist conspirators who directed their bullets against the Premier Inyukai and the bank magnate Dana.

STAKING ON WAR AS A PREVENTATIVE AGAINST REVOLUTION

The *transition* from the sharp zone of economic and agrarian crisis to an annexationist war, and its satellite, the war inflation boom, supplied the Japanese military-fascist movement with a concrete national political feeling. Japanese fascism looks on a war of plunder in China and a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. as a *preventative against revolution in Japan.* The junior military officers were the pace-makers of the fascist offensive because they most directly reflected the discontent of those "mass" strata of landlords and capitalists whose position had been shaken. Simultaneously these officers were the mouthpiece of their senior commanders who considered it necessary to remind the bureaucratic and banking leaders that a serious big war requires a serious fighting reconstruction, and in this matter the military mailed fist must "partly supplement and partly replace the monopoly of finance capital" not for the purpose of belittling its ruling role but for the very purpose of increasing it by making up for the shortcomings of the financial oligarchy which had grown up in an atmosphere of parasitism under the constant guardianship of the reactionary monarchy.

In Japan as in every other bourgeois country,

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> ". . . fascism is the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital. Fascism tries to secure a mass basis for monopolist capital *among the petty bourgeoisie*, appealing to the peasantry, artisans, office employees, and civil servants who have been thrown out of their normal course of life, and particularly to the declassed elements in the big cities, also trying to penetrate into the working class." (Theses of the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I.)

The peculiarity of Japan is the fact that the "aggressiveness of monopolist capital in Japan is *multiplied* by the military adventurism of absolutist, military-feudal imperialism". (Thesis of the West-European Bureau, E.C.C.I.). The protective interests of the reactionary monarchist system supply additional inflammatory materials for organizing military adventures and attacks. The most reactionary, most chauvinist and most imperialist elements of finance capital in Japan are the bulwark of the reactionary monarchist system of the army and navy of the Mikado. Japanese fascism is not merely protecting the dictatorship of capital. It is defending the reactionary monarchy of the Mikado and landlordism. For this very reason, despite all the differences between the old reactionary and the new fascist groups, they cannot be contrasted to each other. They are communicating vessels!

The economic crisis and the war shook up the masses of the people and awakened their interest in politics. Fascism in its most varied shades is trying to get hold of this political activization of the masses so that this activization will not sweep away the dam of the police-monarchist regime. This regime itself needs the help of fascism so that with the aid of various kinds of *substitutes for the mass movement* it can weaken the too high pressure of international and internal class contradictions. The Czarist monarchy of the Romanoffs more than once tried to switch the discontent of the masses over into the channels of anti-Jewish pogroms and pogroms of oppressed nationalities. Modern imperialism tries to do this on an incomparably bigger scale, trying to switch the discontent of the masses with decaying and dying capitalism over to the inflaming of a world imperialist slaughter and the struggle against the U.S.S.R. and the working class. However, the "democratic" maneuvering powers of Japanese imperialism are ridiculously limited. *Fascism widens the maneuvering powers of the absolute reactionary monarchy*. The Right, Black Hundred flank of the military-fascist movement in Japan is represented by the Society of the Black Dragon or Kokichui Kai. To it are affiliated the reservist organizations which are officially supported by the War Ministry. The Center is represented by the organizations of bourgeois circles such as Kokukin

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Domei and other groupings which are politically trying to centralize and fuse into one body all the bourgeois-landlord camp in the name of the Great Mission of Japan in Asia and the "triumph of the national idea in the struggle against Bolshevism". The role of transmission belt to the plebeian masses of town and village is played on the one hand by the mixed conspirative organizations of junior officers and kulak-landlord elements, and on the other hand, by the fascist organizations which are speculating on the anti-capitalist demagogy, on "national socialism", etc., like the party of Akamatsu, ex-leader of social-democracy. Japanese social-fascism stands in extremely close relations with Japanese fascism. Mitsuoka, the reformist leader and secretary of the Federation of Labor, declared in an interview:

> "Since 1924 we have been insisting that national and class interests do not clash. The General Federation of Labor at times has been severely criticized for being nationalistic, but now its methods are being followed by others. We have become prudent and learned the advisability of settling labor disputes by negotiations as much as possible, instead of precipitating strikes without adequate preparation [!] just for the love of it. *This policy was practically impossible while Communists were in our camp. It was for that reason the police authorities were hard on us,* but they are not tolerant [!] towards all labor organizations which are extricated from the grip of Communism." (*Trans-Pacific*, Feb. 1, 1934.)

Matsuoka personifies the servility and police grovelling of Japanese social-fascism and its auxiliary role towards the police-monarchy and fascism.

The swelling of the war inflation boom permitted Japanese fascism to take on itself the role of initiator in the "national" mobilization for war. The plundering of China was announced as a "piece of socialism" by the Japanese social-fascists themselves. The task of subjugating all Asia and bringing it under the heel of the Mikado was represented as the carrying out of the liberation of Asia from the domination of white imperialism. Fascism developed a big noise around the national mobilization of all resources and the plan of saving the nation. However, it lost a considerable part of its fighting energy, having cleared the path to the government coffers for new groups of the medium landlords and capitalists. On the other hand, the dates originally fixed for the attack on the U.S.S.R. were altered. The task of uniting and combining the entire exploiting camp into a single united "national" party could not be solved in the form of a cavalry raid—a couple of shots by conspirators and the presentation of the candidature of Araki to the post of national super-dictator. This task still remains to be solved, by rounding off the sharp corners and carrying on complex flanking maneuvers

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through Kokumin Domei, the new organizations of reserve officers Mokokai, Meirin-Kai, etc.

The fights of the military-fascist groups with the parties have gone beyond the limits of family quarrels and this has alarmed both sides. The official declaration of Meirin-Kai states:

> "The political parties are hinting that the farming villages will be reduced to poverty because of the military. In fact we do not advocate war talk or use arguments liable to create the public unrest. But the views of the Minseito, even were they the truth [!] are liable to direct the farming population against the military, thus bringing about the so-called alienation of the people from the military. That eventuality not only will shake the spirit of the people, which has become tense in determination to meet the anticipated crisis, but it can be said that it is most injurious to the nation in other ways." (*Trans-Pacific*, Feb. 8, 1932.)

This is symptomatic. Both on the international arena and inside Japanese imperialism, *a number of new maneuvers and diversions have to be carried on* in order to break through to the counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union. The possible reverses and surprises of this war are so great that they cause considerable hesitations even among the Japanese bourgeoisie, who understand that they will have to fight not against the Chinese emperor and not against the Russian czar but against the international fatherland of all the toilers, having growing revolution in their rear and Soviet China rising on the flank.

Nevertheless, the existence of this risk and the new difficulties on the path of war against the U.S.S.R. do not diminish the danger of this war but on the contrary intensify it, because Japanese imperialism has started a desperate gamble, it already feels that it is getting out of its depth and is trying to save its critical and contradictory position by new adventures. It is steadily accumulating forces and funds in Manchuria, building hundreds of miles of new military railways, getting its hands on North China, preparing diversions against the Mongolian Peoples' Republic and is avidly waiting for the moment to attack the Soviet borders.

Japanese imperialism is trying to save its parasitic decaying social system, swelling out its territorial borders and hurling its military forces against the "Red danger" which is menacing by its creative force and the contagious example of its Socialist construction.

All the diplomatic, military, economic and political calculations tend to this. Bankrupt imperialism is trying to discount its bills under the pretense of saving bourgeois civilization. It sees its only chance in this. And here is the boundary separating it from revolutionary retribution.

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The Farmers Are Getting Ready for Revolutionary Struggles

(Speech Delivered at the Eighth Convention of the Communist Party of the U.S.A.)

By H. PURO

THE unprecedented extent of the economic crisis is having a devastating effect upon the living standards not only of the workers, but also the poor farmers. It has therefore created a great ferment and upsurge among the toiling farmers.

The nature of the crisis was described as follows by Comrade Stalin in his recent speech to the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union:

> ". . . the industrial crisis has become interwoven with the agrarian crisis which has affected all the agrarian and semi-agrarian countries without exception, and this could not but make the industrial crisis more complicated and profound.
>
> ". . . the agrarian crisis became more acute in this period and affected all branches of agriculture, including cattle-raising, degrading it to the level of passing from machine labor to hand labor, to the substitution of the horse for the tractor, to the sharp diminution in the use, and sometimes the complete abandonment, of artificial fertilizers, which caused the industrial crisis to become still more protracted."

The crisis being of such a nature, it is but logical that the industrial and agrarian crises have intensified each other, making the present economic crisis unprecedented.

In this situation, the workers have not been the only ones to struggle militantly against the effects of the crisis. The toiling farmers have also shown a great desire and a readiness for militant struggle. It is in this light that we can explain the tremendous wave of farm struggles in the United States, especially during the last two years. These struggles have taken the form of fights for relief for the poorest strata of farmers, battles against tax sales and mortgage foreclosures, and great farm strikes.

The most significant of all these struggles have been the farmers' strikes. Inspired by the example of the workers in industry, the toiling farmers accepted the strike weapon as the most effective form of mass struggle against the outrageous robbery of the bankers, monopolies, trusts, and other exploiters, and against the devastating effects of the crisis.

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COMMUNIST LEADERSHIP IN FARM STRUGGLES

During all these struggles, the Communist Party has shown its ability to bring into practice the teachings of Lenin on the peasant question. It has been able to give many of these struggles definite leadership, directing them along clear class struggle channels, and thereby making the growing farmers' movement an integral part of the general struggles of the American masses against capitalism.

Our Party has also unified these struggles by giving them organizational mediums in the form of the two great united front farmers' relief conferences, one held in Washington in 1932, and the other in Chicago in the fall of 1933. These united front conferences embraced, not only the militant Left-Wing farm organizations, but also a considerable number of the rank and file of the old-line farm organizations, as well as unorganized farmers. In these conferences, especially the one held in Chicago, our Party presented a militant program that not only expressed the desires and needs of the great masses of the toiling farmers, but which had a clear-cut class struggle basis.

A highly important feature of our farm work is the definite organization of 7,000 to 8,000 Negro farmers into the Share Croppers' Union in the South, under the leadership of the Party. Wherein lies the significance of this organization? In the fact that it is made up of the poorest strata of farmers, semi-proletarian Negro farmers who are oppressed by their white landlords, not only as farmers, but as members of an oppressed nation, for they are denied the right to the land.

In mobilizing hundreds of thousands of farmers for militant struggle, our Party has succeeded in bringing this movement into the general channels of class struggle by joint action with the workers. In the farmers' strikes, workers from the cities, especially the unemployed, have helped the farmers to picket. In workers' strikes, farmers collect food for relief. Joint demonstrations of farmers and unemployed workers for relief, and the great interest farmers are expressing in support of the Workers' Unemployment and Social Insurance Bill are further signs of this growing solidarity. Another such sign has been the joint struggles conducted on C.W.A. jobs.

This clearly expressed note of unity between farmers and workers is one of the most significant characteristics of the present movement of the farmers. For the first time in their long struggles to win freedom from their oppressors, the farmers are marching shoulder to shoulder with the workers, under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat and its vanguard, the Communist Party.

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ORGANIZATION OF AGRICULTURAL WORKERS

Our achievements in agrarian work extend to that section of the farm population which is the most consistent and dependent ally of the revolutionary proletariat — namely, the agricultural wage workers. In this sphere of work we have been especially successful on the West Coast, where the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union, under the leadership of our Party, has conducted a number of militant strikes. Despite the severe conditions of terror almost every one of them was highly successful. As a result of these struggles the Cannery and Agricultural Workers' Industrial Union has definitely rooted itself in the masses of farm workers.

We are now determinedly beginning to organize the Agricultural Workers' Union on a national scale. Our possibilities in this field are gigantic. This morning we received a wire from one of our comrades in Florida. He went there following a rumor that a great movement is developing among the agricultural workers. He wires that there are 20,000 citrus workers in the Florida fruit fields on strike.

Our District Organizer in Texas has informed me that near the Mexican border we have an Agricultural Workers Union with 450 members. This union is directly under the leadership of our Party. Comrades, there are hundreds of thousands of agricultural workers all over the country who could easily be reached by us.

The strikes of farmers and agricultural workers are the expression of the desire of the toiling masses in the countryside to follow the example of the industrial proletariat in resisting the efforts of the capitalists to make them bear the burdens of the crisis. This is especially exemplified in the fight against the Roosevelt New Deal. Many of these struggles are assuming a distinct political character. What is our task in conducting these struggles? First and foremost, to put all efforts into winning of these economic demands.

WE MUST POLITICIZE FARM STRUGGLES

As Communists, however, we have other tasks in connection with these struggles. We must be able to utilize them to give political revolutionary education to the participants. Moreover, we must direct these everyday struggles into political channels. The very nature of these struggles indicates their political character; that is, the struggles both of the workers and farmers are directed against the Roosevelt New Deal, against the program of the capitalist government, against the N.R.A., against the A.A.A., so that they are in their character political struggles. But we must give clearer aims and bolder political character to these struggles.

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The task of the Party is to politicize these struggles by teaching the workers and farmers that it is not possible under capitalism to achieve any lasting improvement in their conditions. And here we must bring forward the revolutionary aims of our Party.

At the present time we see that the Roosevelt New Deal is being enforced by compulsory measures, not only by *forcing* the workers in the industries to submit, but also the farmers (Bankhead Bill). Recently Secretary of Agriculture Wallace unmistakably indicated that these compulsory measures would be taken. He stated that it is necessary to take out of production from 25 to 50 million additional acres of farm land, and that this program *would be carried out by force, if necessary*. This means that hundreds of thousands of poor farmers are going to be driven out of production and off the land.

In enforcing the A.A.A. program, the Allotment Plan, cutting down the acreage, the capitalists already resort more and more to State power, utilizing State power against the militant farmers. This has been recently demonstrated in the jailing in Indiana of Comrade Tiala, the National Secretary of the United Farmers League, for a term of six months because he organized the farmers to resist foreclosures. Also on a larger scale, injunctions were brought against 92 members of the United Farmers League and Unemployment Councils in South Dakota. This injunction is the most vicious of all moves toward outlawing the United Farmers League and other militant farmers' organizations. At the first attack of the South Dakota Governor and other State officials acting directly as agents of Wall Street and the International Harvester Company, there was some wavering on our part, which shows that our comrades are not yet fully prepared to meet these attacks. But our comrades soon recovered and, through the active mobilization and readiness of the masses to take direct mass action, they have been able to deal smashing blows at the efforts of the injunction.

It is evident that many such attempts to illegalize our militant mass organizations and jail our fighting leaders will be made by the New Dealers. Knowing this, our Party and our mass organizations must prepare to meet these attacks by broader mobilization of the masses for militant struggles.

The new wave of strikes of industrial workers has been followed by new struggles of the agricultural workers and the farmers.

Somehow these struggles of the farmers in the recent period are not so spectacular as those of a year ago. But when we study more deeply the nature of these struggles we are struck with the following: The distinguishing feature of the recent struggles of the farmers is that they revolve around the question of relief and foreclosures. This is an indication that it is the *poorest sections of farmers*

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that are now becoming militant and the leaders of farmers' struggles, whereas in the earlier farmers' strikes it was the militant *middle farmer* elements who were the main force.

THE DANGER OF SOCIAL-FASCIST INFLUENCE ON THE FARMERS' MOVEMENT

Comrades, while we recognize the achievements of our Party in agrarian work, we must prepare our Party to meet the new situation and to give effective leadership. First, we must recognize the fact that as the poor, small and middle farmers are being radicalized, we Communists are the only force influencing this great wave of radicalization in the direction of overthrowing capitalism by revolutionary struggle. But there are other elements who are trying to use the ferment among the farmers, for other ends.

To maintain their hold on the masses, the capitalists employ the policy of division of labor. First of all, we have some "progressive" capitalists, some agrarian politicians who come from the agricultural States, such as Senators Norris, LaFollette and Frazier; Governor Langer of North Dakota; and others who represent the big farmers and the small capitalists against the Wall Street bankers and the big industrialists of the East. As the crisis deepens and the masses become more radicalized, these gentlemen make more and more demagogic speeches, sometimes going so far as to proclaim the necessity "to change the system".

We must prepare to combat the illusions that these "progressives" are creating among the toiling population, especially among the farmers, by analyzing their programs and exposing them as agents of capitalism. This we have not yet done sufficiently. We must do much more to take up concretely their various proposals, such as the Frazier Bill, to expose them as representing the interests of the rich farmers and the small capitalists. There are also other elements, third parties, such as the Socialist Party.

Until lately the Socialist Party never paid much attention to the farmers' question. But as a result of these great farm struggles the S.P. has "taken up" the farmers. Now Norman Thomas, especially, is becoming very much "interested" in the farmers. He expresses this "interest" in his speeches, in his writings, in his tours to farming sections. The Socialist Party has also decided to send organizers into North Dakota and other agrarian States, which for years they have left to the Non-Partisan League and the Farmer-Labor Party. They are now making attempts to win over the farmers to their side.

The most dangerous of these third party movements is the Farmer-Labor Party. I happened to be in Minneapolis during the recent convention of the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party and was

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able to follow very closely the convention proceedings. I must say, comrades, that our Party has a very difficult task to combat the radical demagogy of the Farmer-Labor Party in Minnesota and other States. Mr. Olson, Farmer-Labor Party Governor, stated in his speech: "I am not liberal, I am radical, and when Fascism comes, it is us reds [!] that are fighting against Fascism". They also adopted a "radical" program and said that it is now the task of the Farmer-Labor Party to become a radical party, that the Democratic Party has taken the role of the liberal party.

The more "radical" they pretend to be, the more "radical" their phrases, the more dangerous they become for us, because they are trying to win over those sections of the workers and farmers who are very close to us and who are coming towards us. It is the task of these third parties to perform this service for the capitalist class which the Democratic and Republican Parties are unable to do. Our Party must be prepared to meet these third party dangers, especially this year, when we are approaching Congressional and State elections.

FARMER-LABOR PENETRATION INTO RANKS OF OUR PARTY

That movement is trying to penetrate even our own ranks. For example, let us take Comrade Taylor's adherence to the farmer-labor movement.

Comrade Taylor, who until recently was national chairman of the United Farmers League, states in a letter that the Farmer-Labor Party can be utilized as a movement towards revolution—if not for the revolution itself. Now, comrades, what does this mean? It means that there is no need for the Communist Party. It means the liquidation of the Communist Party. In spite of the efforts of the Central Committee, Comrade Taylor has resisted the correction and open repudiation of his line. But, while the Central Committee has given Comrade Taylor time to think over and to repudiate his line, this does not mean that the Party will tolerate any comrade in its ranks who persists in differing with its general line. Our Party has only one line. It is not possible to be a member of our Party and have a different line from the general line of the Party. (*Applause.*)

I think, comrades, I am expressing the opinion of the Central Committee, when I state that the Central Committee will surely take very definite steps against such deviations. Of course, this is not Comrade Taylor's only deviation. Sharp measures against such deviations are especially necessary now because of the great danger of the farmer-labor movement.

Less serious deviations occur here and there, as Comrade Browder mentioned in his report regarding South Dakota. In my opinion, the demonstrative nomination of Comrade Walstad for governor in the big mass meeting by the farmers and workers on such an

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occasion was correct. This action was subsequently endorsed by the Political Bureau. Still, in this connection, the line of the Party could be interpreted in an opportunistic way if the Party does not unhesitatingly come forward, and officially nominate Comrade Walstad, and conduct a real campaign around this nomination.

If this is done, we can mobilize great united front support of the workers and farmers around Comrade Walstad as the Communist candidate for governor, and link up this election campaign as a political fight against the injunction of the South Dakota farmers.

Another example of such a deviation is the following one from Nebraska. We recently got a report that in one county in Nebraska, where we have about 89 Party and Y.C.L. members, the comrades are contemplating putting on a united front farmers' ticket instead of a straight Communist Party ticket.

NEED FOR CLARIFYING ARTICLES IN OUR PRESS

There must be more articles written and published in *The Communist* and the *Daily Worker* regarding the line of the Party in the elections, calling attention to the Farmer-Labor Party danger and how to fight it. We cannot blame comrades in the field who are not yet clear on this matter if they make mistakes, if we do not adequately deal with this question and make the Party line clear.

In connection with our fight against these third parties of capitalism, we must, in addition to combatting social-fascism, strike sharply at the Right danger in our own ranks. These Right tendencies are growing. There are some comrades among us who take the united front in such a manner that once we enter into the united front we lose our identity. These comrades argue that we must not mention the Communist Party, that we must not mention the revolutionary way out, etc. Comrades, these are serious form of Right opportunism, which if permitted to go on, will lead to serious consequences. Such errors will lead us to a compromising attitude towards the Farmer-Labor Party. Such mistakes will disarm our Party in its fight against social-fascism.

We must strive to put forward, energetically, the line and task of our Party as expressed in the thesis of the Thirteenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. This powerful document emphasizes the fact that especially in the present period is it necessary to bring forward the Party very emphatically in all phases of our mass work.

WE MUST CLARIFY CLASS DIFFERENTIATION

There are certain other shortcomings that appear in our work among the farmers. For instance, the question of a clear attitude towards the different class forces in the countryside. While in the

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discussion we have emphasized the necessity and taken practical, concrete steps to concentrate upon the agricultural workers, the proletarian element in the countryside, as the most important element, and while we have begun to emphasize the winning over of the poor and small farmers we have not always been able to make this very necessary distinction.

The line of the Party in this matter has been often disputed. We have not always realized that we are working among the farmers and other toiling masses in the countryside with the definite aim of winning them over to a revolutionary alliance with the proletariat. We have not clearly understood that the class lines of different strata of the farmers determine to what extent we can rely on them as allies of the proletariat. Of course, comrades, in studying these class lines, we should guard against "Left" tendencies which disregard the middle farmer elements who in the United States are such an important factor.

The agrarian resolution of the Extraordinary Party Conference points out that in the United States the unprecedented depth of the crisis has ruined, not only the poor and small farmers, but the great mass of middle farmers as well. The resolution draws the conclusion that it is possible in the United States, not only to neutralize the middle farmers, but also to bring considerable sections of them into conscious revolutionary struggle for the overthrow of the capitalist system.

This is a very important fact. But upon what shall we base our efforts to win the ruined middle farmers to the side of the revolutionary proletariat? Comrade Stalin has pointed out that we can win the middle farmers *only if we base our program definitely on the poor and small farmers, and at the same time struggle sharply against the rich farmers, the kulak element.*

Comrades, when we keep in mind the growing danger of fascism in the United States, this question of leading the class struggle in the countryside becomes a highly important one. Rich farmer elements constitute numerically the biggest potential support for fascism. If we set about our tasks among the toiling farmers, not only can we prevent fascism from establishing a mass base among the American farmers, but we can win the poor, small and ruined middle farmers to the side of the revolutionary proletariat in its struggles against fascism.

THE PROGRAMMATIC QUESTION

Now, comrades, a few words about the programmatic question. In the course of the last two years we have gathered quite a rich experience. This experience has been incorporated into the pro-

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grams of the various Left-Wing organizations, into the united front program and into the slogans and policy of our Party. There are still several important points which we must discuss in order to achieve further clarity.

Comrade Browder, in his report, dealt at length with the question of land in the South. In this valuable contribution, Comrade Browder explained the importance of making the question of land a central point in our agrarian program in the South. In further discussion on this question with Comrade Murphy, we came to the conclusion that it is necessary not only to write this into our program and raise the slogan of the land question, but, what is more, the Party must begin to carry on agitation on the question of the seizure of the land by the share croppers. The result will be the recruiting of great sections of the toiling agrarian population in the South, especially Negro share croppers, into the revolutionary struggles.

The central point in our program for realizing immediate demands for the farmers is cancellation of debts. This has already been written into the programs of our farmers' mass organizations. It is the slogan around which were mobilized great sections of the farmers in the Chicago united front conference. While this slogan has assumed great popularity among the poor, small, and ruined middle farmers, we have not yet organized definite struggles around it.

The national program of the United Farmers League must be finally finished in time for the first national convention of the U.F.L., which takes place the latter part of June in Minneapolis.

In the course of our experience in agrarian work, and in our formulating of clear class-struggle programs for the mass organizations of militant farmers, we have already gathered rich material for the Party agrarian program itself. However, we were not yet sufficiently prepared to write and propose a Party agrarian program for this Convention. I think it should be agreed that we must now begin to set up machinery to work out such a program in the near future.

THE ROLE OF THE LEFT WING IN THE UNITED FRONT

A few words about our organization tasks. In our experiences, during the past year, we have also been able to clarify many organizational questions that we were unclear about a year ago. We have now definitely taken up the task of consolidating the Left Wing under the leadership of the United Farmers League. At the same time we now see more clearly our tasks in the united front work and the role of the Left Wing in the united front. The task of the Left Wing is to be the militant leader of this united front.

However, on the question of the united front, there are still

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in our agrarian work, as in other fields, many misunderstandings—misconceptions that the united front work is mainly the work of holding conventions, or that in order to institute united front work, we must have a national conference or at least a State-wide conference. While conventions and conferences play a very important part in working out the program and giving organizational impetus for united front work, we must realize that it is not sufficient to have conferences. It is very important, even in the preparation of these conferences, to start united front struggles from below.

How can this be done? For instance in the following manner: the comrades in the United Farmers League or other farmers' organizations, or even Party comrades who are in no farm organization, actually mobilize farmers in the Holiday Association, in the Farmers Union, in the co-operatives, and unorganized farmers for concrete action to prevent sheriff sales, to prevent mortgage foreclosures, to fight for relief, or to organize a broad united front around the farmers' strikes. This is the best application of the united front—*organizing the united front around actual struggles.*

THE PARTY MUST LEAD THE WORK

In order to strengthen the Party leadership in the farmers' movement it is necessary *in every District, in every Section and every locality,* for the Party comrades to assume the responsibility and tasks of giving leadership to the farmers' movement and not to wait for comrades in the Central Committee's Agrarian Commission, or in the United Farmers League, to come and do the work or give them instructions. The line and instruction are given in the Party press and in the Party literature. The comrades must take agrarian work as their definite task, as part of their Party work, work that is not to be separated from the other phases of their activity. There is danger in departmentalizing this work.

In my opinion, the agrarian resolution of the Extraordinary Party Conference was a document supplementary to the Open Letter, and therefore part of the Open Letter, and not in contradiction with the concentration task in the basic industries. The Party line and tasks in relation to agrarian work should be understood in that light; and if comrades like Mills and Schmies in the highly industrialized districts find time to give direction to our agrarian work, to give guidance to that work, certainly comrades in the other districts and sections can do likewise.

One of the foremost organizational tasks, which I wish to emphasize strongly as a task of the entire Party, is the question of building up the *Farmers National Weekly* as a mass organ which will reach not merely tens of thousands but hundreds of thousands

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of American farmers. We have taken steps to realize this task and we have already established such an organ in Chicago. There we are centrally located, and in my opinion that is the best place for such an organ. The paper is not yet what it ought to be. It is yet weak and small, with a circulation of not much above 10,000. But, comrades, we cannot gain a broad mass circulation for the *Farmers National Weekly* without the entire Party taking this as part of its task. I think it is possible for the Districts and Sections and Party units to lay this down as the most important task of our agrarian Sections and for the units in the countryside. Comrades, it is possible to increase the circulation of the *Farmers National Weekly* to half a million copies. What a tremendous mass weapon this will be to put our Party line and militant program forward before the great sections of toiling farmers.

Comrade Foster, in his article, has called our attention to the work among the youth. Here we must confess that although we have done some work to organize several youth sections of the United Farmers League and other farmers' organizations, we have not gone wholeheartedly into this important task. There are tremendous possibilities for organizing farm youth, who are largely semi-proletarian, thrown into the unemployed lines, the C.C.C. camps, and drifting around the country. There are tremendous possibilities of organizing these young toilers as a potential force for the revolutionary movement through our agrarian work. We must get closer contacts with the Y.C.L. comrades and Y.C.L. work to push this phase of our work energetically. We must organize Young Pioneers, too. The same applies to the work among the farm women. They have shown in many struggles that they are active elements and ready to take part in the militant and even revolutionary struggles.

WE MUST SHOW THE REVOLUTIONARY WAY OUT

Comrades, in order to direct this great movement among the farmers and to utilize all the possibilities of radicalization in the countryside, we must not limit ourselves to fighting for the every-day demands of the farmers. We must clearly and consciously direct these struggles towards the revolutionary path under the leadership of the revolutionary proletariat and its vanguard, the Communist Party. Therefore, we must raise more forcefully and more openly the question of the revolutionary way out of the crisis. There has been a certain hesitation about doing this.

In raising this question of the revolutionary way out, we begin to follow the line laid down by the Comintern and in our Party thesis. Comrade Browder has repeatedly emphasized that we must raise the question of Soviet Power among the farmers, too. We must

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place before them the question of collectivization and other gains which we will be able to offer the toiling farmers immediately upon the establishment of Soviet Power in the United States. This can become a very popular and concrete way of raising the slogan of the revolutionary way out.

In this connection we must raise the question of the necessity for the revolutionary change of the system, as Comrade Stalin did in his speech to the collective farmers a little over a year ago. He explained what were the necessary pre-requisites to achieve what the farmers of the Soviet Union have achieved through collectivization. It was necessary to overthrow Czarism and the bourgeoisie by the revolutionary seizure of power in the hands of the workers and poor farmers.

Comrades, if any one doubts that the toiling farmers in the United States are getting ready for revolutionary struggles, I want to say that we are receiving many letters from farmers and farm women, asking how they can become Communists, how they can find a way out of the crisis, how they can get more information as to what Communism means for the farmers, what Communists would offer the farmers. All these questions indicate that the masses of poor farmers and semi-proletarians who suffer capitalist robbery and exploitation will not hesitate to take part in revolutionary struggles to overthrow Wall Street's rule and set up a dictatorship of the proletariat. Comrade Stalin, reviewing the world situation in his speech to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U., said that although this radicalization is taking place, we must not assume that the masses are already prepared to storm the citadel of capitalism. But, he added, *"the idea of storming it is maturing in the minds of the masses—there can hardly be any doubt about that"*.

Comrades, it is our Party's task to speed up this ripening, to speed up the mobilization of the toiling masses for the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism and for the establishment of Soviet Power.

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The Black Belt: Area of Negro Majority

By JAMES S. ALLEN

(This is a section from a larger work on the Negro question. As such, it is part of a broader treatment of the subject, and the reader should not expect to find all questions raised here answered in this excerpt.)

THE existence in the South of a continuous and well-defined area where the Negroes have formed the majority of the population practically from the time of the first settlement of this territory is fundamental to both an analysis and a solution of the Negro question in the United States. In a study of the factors which led to the formation of this area and particularly of the factors which prolonged its existence after the overthrow of chattel slavery, is to be found the basic data defining the present situation of the American Negroes.

Bourgeois population and agricultural studies have recognized the existence in the South of a large area in which the Negro population is concentrated and which has come to be designated in a general way as the Black Belt. A conjuncture between cotton culture, plantation economy and areas of Negro majority has been noted in these studies. In various historical surveys the old slave economy is compared with the present-day cotton plantation. It has long been a commonplace in northern liberal literature, even to be found today in the writings of the southern liberals of the "new school", that there exists in the South a species of bondage not far removed from chattel slavery. Economically, socially and politically the area variously dubbed as the "backward South," the "cotton belt," the "bible belt," and the "solid South," has been vaguely recognized as unique with respect to the rest of the United States. In short, the bourgeois social sciences have at most only been able to perceive isolated phenomena without grasping their profound implications when placed in proper relation to the whole complex of capitalist society.

The Census Bureau of the United States has made special studies of this area, based on its decennial enumeration of population by county and color. According to the 1930 Census of Population there are 192 counties in the South in which Negroes constitute

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half or more than half of the population. The number of such counties has decreased since 1860 when there were 244 counties in which half or more than half of the population was Negro. Only in the state of Mississippi were the Negroes in the majority in 1930. The counties of Negro majority are grouped in southeastern Virginia and northeastern North Carolina, in a continuous belt of territory stretching from the South Carolina coast through central Georgia and Alabama and into Mississippi, and in another slightly detached area embracing the lower Mississippi River valley. Although the number of counties having clear Negro majorities has decreased, the contours of the area in which they are situated have undergone little change since 1860.

Critics of the Communist analysis of the Negro question have most frequently based their counter-argument on the assertion that this analysis is but a mechanical application of a policy perhaps appropriate elsewhere, but having no reality in the United States for the simple reason that there is no contiguous territory of Negro majority in the country, and that even if such a territory exists, it is so small and disconnected and contains such a slight proportion of the total Negro population of the country as to offer no basis for the application of the right of self-determination. For example, Norman Thomas, spokesman of the Socialist Party, basing himself on a very superficial glance at census figures, such as outlined above, declares that there are only spots of Negro majority and that therefore the Communists have no basis for their contentions. He charges the Communists with advocating a number of jim-crow Negro republics in the South, intensifying race hatred and propagating "race war".[1] In the same strain, it has been pointed out that the mass migration of Negroes from the South during and after the World War, coupled with the effects of industrialization in the South, has destroyed any claim, perhaps justified previously, to the continued existence of the Black Belt. With Mr. Thomas' political deductions, as well as those of other pseudo-Marxists who follow the same line of reasoning, we shall deal later. At the present we are concerned with establishing the existence of the Black Belt as an area of *continuous* Negro majority, a fact which can be proved by statistical data.

The problem, however, is not as simple as it might seem at first glance. At most, the census data given above only presents the *densest* area of Negro population and indicates the *core* of the Black Belt. A further examination of population figures shows that there are 285 counties, grouped around the counties of clear

1. *New Leader*, July 23, 1932.

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Negro majority, in which the Negroes constitute between 30 per cent and 50 per cent of the population of each county taken singly. In this more or less continuous stretch, comprising 477 counties, there are 13,744,424 inhabitants, of which 6,163,328 are Negroes, forming 44.8 per cent of the total population in 1930.

A mechanical addition of county population figures, without any regard to the factors which determine this concentration of Negro population, is in itself insufficient. However, from the point of view of population, these figures do indicate the contours of the Black Belt. But even within these limits the figures given above do not sufficiently define the area of continuous Negro majority. In the first place, they are based upon percentages of population within each county taken singly. Populations do not stop short at county or state lines. Because a county line, cutting through a specific area, happens to separate on one side of the line an area in which, say, 60 per cent of the inhabitants are Negroes, and on the other side an area in which only 35 per cent are Negroes, is no reason to drop the 35 per cent area from the whole territory of Negro majority. County borders serve political and administrative purposes, and they have been changed at will to meet the needs of this or that political party. This is especially true in the Black Belt, where reaction set itself the purpose of destroying the political power of the Negro masses and disfranchising them after the defeat of post-Civil War reconstruction. In the second place, the figures given above merely indicate that somewhere within the territory in which the 477 counties are situated there does exist an area of continuous Negro majority.

In order to determine the specific region of continuous Negro majority it has been necessary to retabulate the available census data on population in the South without regard to existing state or county borders, although we are limited by the census to considering population in county units.

This area is shown in the map on page 586. The solid portion of the map shows the continuous territory in which the Negroes are just slightly more than half (50.3 per cent) of the total population. In determining this area the counties of clear Negro majority have been used as a basis for a broader and continuous area, within which are to be found isolated counties or groups of counties which do not have Negro majorities. There are 9,525,865 inhabitants in this territory, of whom 4,790,049 are Negroes. Of the total Negro population in the United States, 40.3 per cent live here.

Needless to say, neither the composition of the population nor economic and social conditions alter suddenly at the borders of this

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territory. There is a gradual decrease in the density of the Negro population as well as a gradual change in economy along its periphery. A study of the periphery of the territory of Negro majority should throw additional light upon the latter and we have indicated the limits of this borderland on the map. In the periphery there is a population of 8,176,921, of which 2,358,302 are Negroes, constituting 28.8 per cent of the inhabitants, and 19.8 per cent of the total Negro population in the United States. The area of continuous Negro majority we shall call Black Belt, its periphery will be termed Border Territory. The distribution of the Negro population in 1930 is summed up in the following table:

Region	Number	% of Negro Population in U. S.
Black Belt	4,790,049	40.3
Border Territory	2,358,302	19.8
South,* other than above	1,627,493	13.8
Non-South	3,115,299	26.1
Total	11,891,143	100.0

In analyzing the distribution of the Negro population in this manner it is not our intention to imply that immutable and unalterable geographic limits exist, corresponding to what we have termed Black Belt and Border Territory. To a certain degree, the limits we have set for these territories are more or less arbitrary and have not been defined by us on the basis of population statistics alone. In the case of the Black Belt, population data was the principal basis for determining its contours. But other factors also had to be considered, of which the most important is the extent of the plantation economy which is the most powerful factor determining the area of Negro majority. Certain areas which, taken singly, have not a clear Negro majority today have been included in the Black Belt precisely because of the persistence of plantation economy, although in a deteriorated state, and because chattel slavery has left its imprint there to the present day. Since the Negro is the principal victim of the plantation, its extent is reflected in the proportion of Negroes in the population. Thus, in those southern areas where there is the greatest proportion of Negroes the plantation system is the strongest.

* Unless otherwise stated, the term South is used to denote only those states, portions of which lie in the Black Belt: Virginia, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, Texas and Arkansas. The census designation South includes, in addition to the above, Delaware, West Virginia, Kentucky and Oklahoma.

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In the case of the Border Territory, a fringe was simply set off depending in extent principally upon the percentage of Negroes. In some cases this area has been enlarged because of the specific problems raised by its peculiarities of location or economy, in other cases because at one time it had a clear Negro majority. This territory offers an especially valuable basis for comparison with conditions in the Black Belt, particularly in analyzing the special characteristics of capitalist development in the South.

Here a distinction must also be drawn between a method employed to facilitate the analysis of the Negro question and its practical solution. It is true that in determining the extent of the area of *continuous* Negro majority and of the Border Territory, we have also kept in mind the practical solution of the Negro question as encompassed in the application of the right of self-determination for the Negro people. *But the Black Belt, understood as the area of continuous Negro majority, does not set the limits of a future autonomous republic in a Soviet America.* Whether such an autonomous republic is to be formed, how large it will be, cannot be determined by merely calculating percentages of population. Other factors, such as its historical development, its economy, its relation to the United States, the status of the revolution there, etc., are equally important. In any case, whether Negroes living in the area outnumber the whites, or whether they form only 49.9 per cent or 45 per cent of the population is not the *determining* factor, either from the point of view of defining the nature of the Negro question or for purposes of establishing an autonomous republic. Such a republic, it is highly probable, might include both the Black Belt and Border Territory in which the Negroes are 40 per cent of the total population, or with some variations.

However, the final solution of the Negro question under Socialism must also depend upon the development and the course of the struggle for Negro liberation. It has been chiefly to show the roots of the Negro question and more succinctly to demonstrate its connections with the economic slave remnants in the form of the plantation, that we have made such distinctions as to territory. By defining the territory in which the Negroes just outnumbered the whites in 1930 (we might have taken as a basis for our study a larger area in which the Negroes formed the majority of the population in 1900 or 1910) we have at the same time indicated that area upon which the antagonisms of capitalism in the United States have been greatly intensified by the remnants of slavery and the most severe subjection of the Negro masses. And it is here, therefore, that powerful revolutionary forces are also accumulating.

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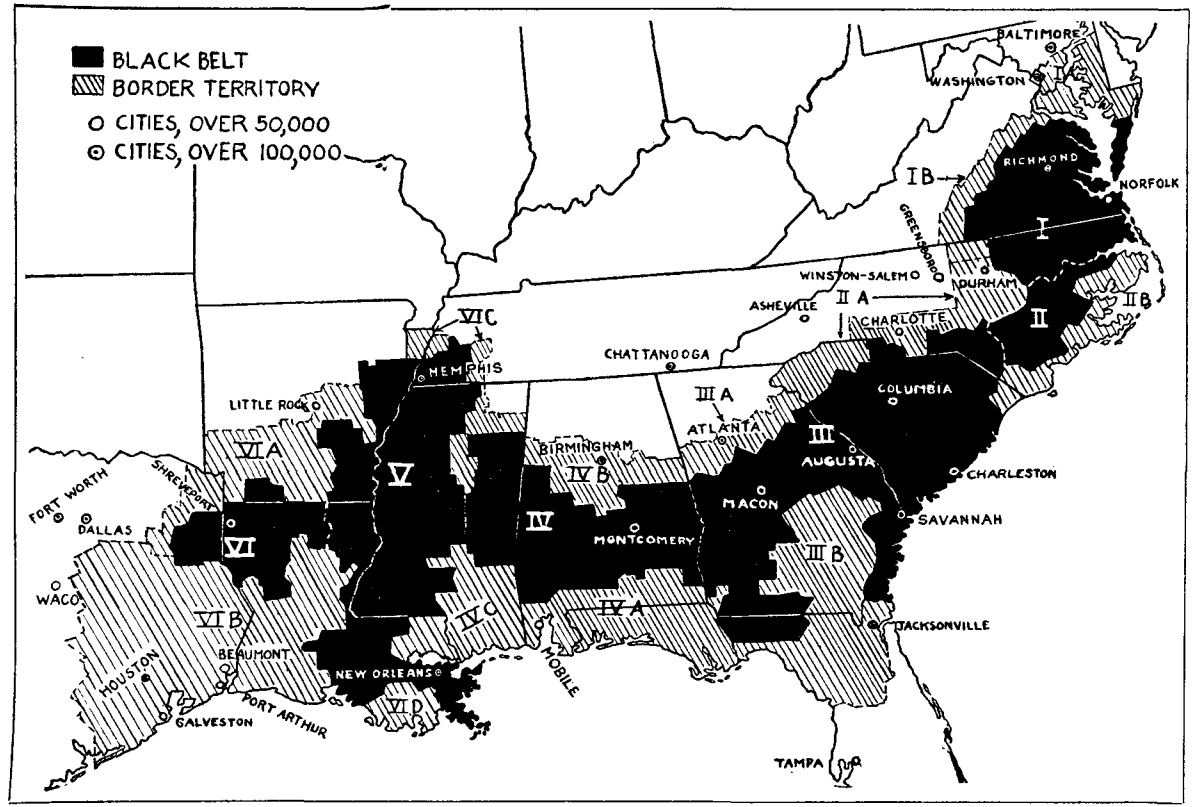

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The Black Belt and the Border Territory have not been subject uniformly to the economy of chattel slavery, to the post-Civil War transformation of the plantation and to the forces of capitalist development. This is necessarily reflected in the proportion of the Negroes in the population. In order to facilitate comparison the Black Belt and its periphery have been divided into sub-regions according to certain historical and economic characteristics (see table below). The South Carolina-Georgia, the Alabama-Mississippi and the Mississippi Valley Black Belt regions (III, IV and V on the map) together contain 77 per cent of all the Negroes living in the Black Belt proper. The present-day plantations are situated in these areas. It was here also that the chattel slave plantations attained their highest development. The northernmost (Virginia and North Carolina) and the western (eastern Texas and western Louisiana) regions of the Black Belt, which together contain 23 per cent of the Negro population of the Black Belt, show the lowest proportion of Negroes in their populations.

POPULATION OF BLACK BELT AND BORDER TERRITORY, BY REGIONS, 1930

(*See map on opposite page*)

Region	Total	Negro	% Negro of Total
Black Belt:			
I	1,529,449	668,665	43.7
II	441,340	189,698	43.0
III	2,789,865	1,440,246	51.6
IV	1,190,293	658,927	55.4
V	2,976,980	1,544,745	51.9
VI	597,938	287,968	48.1
Total	9,525,865	4,790,049	50.3
Border Territory:			
IA	283,093	76,789	27.1
IB	253,134	83,037	32.8
IIA	1,192,966	307,287	25.8
IIB	231,354	72,811	31.5
IIIA	719,323	203,978	28.4
IIIB	818,694	278,358	34.0
IVA	546,350	145,261	26.6
IVB	912,385	280,162	30.7
IVC	412,273	117,900	28.6
VIA	718,299	221,082	30.8
VIB	1,820,836	487,583	26.8
VIC	165,947	62,492	37.6
VID	102,267	21,562	21.1
Total, Border Territory	8,176,921	2,358,302	28.8

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The largest Negro populations in the Border Territory are in the rice plantation area adjoining the Black Belt in southeastern Texas and southwestern Louisiana, in the Arkansas cotton country, in the Alabama heavy industrial area around Birmingham, in the cotton growing sections of the Piedmont Plateau not included in the Black Belt in Georgia and the Carolinas, and in the tobacco, turpentine and timber sections of south central Georgia and northern Florida. With the exception of the Birmingham area, large Negro populations occur in plantation or former plantation areas, or, as in Georgia and Florida, where industries closely related to agriculture have taken over some of the forms of exploitation developed by the plantation.

Seventy years after the abolition of chattel slavery the area of the old slave as well as the modern peon plantations still retains the largest concentration of Negro population. Furthermore, over 40 per cent of the total Negro population of the country still constitute the majority of the population in the cenral plantation area, and close to 20 per cent of the total number of Negroes in the country live on the fringes of this area of continuous Negro majority. Only 26 per cent of the Negro population live in an area totally free from the direct *economic* bonds of the plantation system.

But this condition has not been and is not a static one. What has been the history of the distribution of Negro population? And in this connection, does the present area of continuous Negro majority also have historical continuity?

The area of continuous Negro majority was established under the chattel slave system. It had already taken form in the South Atlantic seaboard regions during the colonial period. Its creator and its jailor was the plantation.

Chattel slavery was the only means of assuring a labor supply on the plantations. Early colonists could take with them a working force of indentured servants, but they could not transport the capitalist relations of production with which to force workers to remain wage slaves or starve. There were no masses to be expropriated from the land and transformed into an army of wage workers; instead there was a tremendous extent of free public property which could be transformed into private property and individual means of production by these very indentured servants. These forced laborers soon turned settlers on their own account and together with the free colonists were creating in the North the basis for the development of the capitalist relations of production.

But the plantation system which had been established along

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feudal European lines in the Virginia colony, and which served as a model for the later plantations in the South, could not flourish as long as its labor supply remained uncertain. The slave trade, which in time assured the major portion of the wealth accumulated by the northern merchant capitalists, found at hand in the insipid southern plantation, the form of exploitation best adapted to slave labor. The products of the early plantations in Virginia, Maryland and along the southern Atlantic coast—tobacco, indigo and rice—and the topography of the Coastal Plain, lent themselves to large-scale cultivation by gangs of laborers under close supervision. Transported from a decimated homeland, the African Negro found himself thrust immediately into a discipline of the most primitive and direct form of forced labor, in a social environment which was entirely strange to him. His ties with his own social base had been completely and irrevocably sundered. Out of the background of his fellow slaves he could not even piece together common bonds which could serve as the starting point for creating the solidarity of a uniform social class. His fellow slaves came from diverse peoples of Africa, in varying stages of social development, and spoke different languages. It was only within the completely new conditions of the slave economy, with the past practically a total vacuum, that the slaves could develop mutual bonds and a common language, and create a new social consciousness. Clearly designated from the rest of the population by marked physical characteristics, the Negro slave could not, like the indentured servant, find refuge in the expanse of unsettled land, although some of them did make common cause with Indian tribes.

The concentration of large numbers of slaves on the plantations was an unavoidable weakness of the slave regime. Living in daily contact with each other, subject to uniform conditions of exploitation and of life, the slaves soon developed that class solidarity which, in the form of numerous slave revolts, presented a constant danger to the Bourbon power. The concentration of the slave population facilitated the development of a new people, the American Negro, who is far more a product of the southern plantation than of the Africa of a dim past.

Even in the early period, when the plantation system was taking form and before cotton became the stimulus for its rapid expansion, the Negroes were a significant part of the population in the southern colonies. From some early census enumerations supervised by the British Board of Trade, from estimates of colonial officers and references in contemporary diaries and letters, it is possible to piece together a record of southern population before

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the first federal census of 1790.[2] From this data it would seem that South Carolina had a Negro majority since 1699, when, it was estimated, there were four Negroes to each white man; at any rate it seems to be fairly established that between 1715 and the Revolutionary War, when a large number of slaves were deported by the British, the Negroes were in the majority in the colony, although the 1790 Census reported that the proportion of Negroes was only 44 per cent. A census of Virginia in 1755 reported 103,407 "tithables", of whom 60,078 were Negroes. In 1790 the Negroes were 34.7 per cent of the total population of Maryland, 26.8 per cent in North Carolina and 41 per cent in Virginia. Georgia, a late comer among the colonies, in 1790 already counted 35.9 per cent of its total population as Negro.

The Negro slaves were concentrated, however, in those areas where a staple crop made possible cultivation of large fields under the plantation system. Thus, before it was discovered that rice could be grown along the South Carolina coast, the settlers were getting on as best they could in small-scale and individual farming units. But in 1694 rice was introduced from Madagascar, and when its cultivation proved successful, a large number of slaves were imported. By 1708, an official count of the population along the seaboard of what is now South Carolina revealed 3,500 whites, of whom 120 were indentured servants, 4,100 Negro slaves, and 1,400 Indians held in captivity. The slave population increased with the growth of rice production:

> ". . . In 1724 the whites were estimated at 14,000, the slaves at 32,000 and the rice export was about 4,000 tons; in 1794 the whites were said to be nearly 25,000, the slaves at least 39,000 and the rice export some 14,000 tons, valued at nearly 100,000 pounds sterling; and in 1765 the whites were about 40,000, the slaves about 90,000 and the rice export about 32,000 tons, worth some 225,000 pounds." [3]

A similar development took place on the tobacco plantations of Virginia, which in 1619 received the first group of slaves to be landed on the North American mainland. By the end of the century the Negroes formed the bulk of the plantation gangs.[4]

Although the manor system was already well established in Mary-

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2. These figures have been collected in *American Population Before the Federal Census of* 1790, by Evarts B. Greene and Virginia D. Harrington, New York, 1932.

3. Ulrich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery. A Survey of the Supply, Employment and Control of Negro Labor as Determined by the Plantation Regime*, New York, 1929, p. 87.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 75.

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land by the latter part of the 17th century, the planters could not afford to buy many slaves because of the poor quality of the tobacco, and there were more indentured servants on the plantations than Negroes. In the tobacco-producing colony of North Carolina the first comers arrived in 1660, but these and those who followed continued as small farmers. Only above Albemarle Sound, in the northeastern section of the state, did the plantation system attain full development, and to this day the Negroes still outnumber the whites in this region. Towards the South, however, the land was too barren and the system of agriculture developed on the basis of small proprietorship. Negroes never formed a large part of the population. North Carolina, with the exception of the northeast where the early plantations were located, does not today have an agrarian economy fully typical of the Black Belt and has a correspondingly lower proportion of Negroes.

The forms of exploitation developed even during the early colonial period left an indelible mark on the future history of the South. Wherever the plantation system was deeply rooted, no matter how much it deteriorated later, it left powerful remnants which persist to the present time. A state census of certain Virginia counties was taken in 1782-1783. In eight of these counties the average slave-holding ranged from 8.5 to 13 slaves, 15 planters had more than 100 slaves, and 45 planters between 50 and 100 slaves.[5] Although the plantation has deteriorated in these regions the same eight counties are today situated in the Virginia section of the Black Belt.[6] Similarly, the three chief plantation counties of Maryland, according to the 1790 Census, had about the same scale of slaveholding as the eight Virginia counties. Yet, despite the close proximity of these counties to the North and to areas of high industrial development, they are to be found today bordering on the northern tip of the Black Belt.

The South Carolina colony offers an even more striking comparison. By 1790, indigo which had gradually replaced rice was in turn giving way to cotton in the area around Charleston. The change in product did not necessitate a change in the system of exploitation. According to the federal census of that year, among the 1,643 heads of families in the Charleston District there were 1,318 slaveholders owning 42,949 slaves. The rest of the South Carolina coast, comprising the Georgetown district to the

5. Cited by Phillips, *ibid.*, p. 83.

6. The counties and the proportion of Negroes in their total populations in 1930 are: Amelia, 51%; Hanover, 37%; Lancaster, 45%; Middlesex, 46%; New Kent, 59%; Richmond, 39%; Surry, 60%; and Warwick, 37%.

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North of Charleston and Beaufort to the South, had a similar scale of slave-holdings.[7] Today in the counties of Georgetown, Charleston and Beaufort the percentages of Negroes in the population are 64.4, 54.2 and 71.4, respectively.

Even before the cotton gin was invented (1793), the plantation system was already well developed in Virginia, Maryland, northern North Carolina and along the South Carolina coast into Georgia. In the plantation regions of these colonies, the Negroes already constituted the majority of the population. Within a decade after its invention, the cotton gin was in widespread use and driving cotton cultivation westward at a tremendous pace. When the slave trade was formally closed by an act of Congress in 1808, there were already 1,000,000 Negro slaves in the country. Their numbers multiplied by forced breeding on the old plantations and, supplemented by additional slaves smuggled into the country, they served as the source of labor supply for the new plantations. By 1809 cotton was already a staple in the settlement around Vicksburg in the Mississippi territory; but prior to the War of 1812 the cotton plantation developed principally into the Carolina-Georgia Piedmont and tended south-westward into Alabama.[8] This section, the oldest large-scale cotton growing region in the South, forms the Carolina-Georgia region of the Black Belt today.

In the meantime, sugar plantations were being founded in the delta lands of southeastern Louisiana. The labor supply from the Atlantic Coast was supplemented by slaves brought over from San Domingo by landowners fleeing the slave revolution. By 1830 there were 691 sugar plantations with 36,000 working slaves in this area and by 1850 the number of slaves in the sugar parishes had doubled.[9] This region is to be found within the present Black Belt.

While the westward movements in the North and into Tennessee, Kentucky and Missouri carried with them the seed of capitalist development in the form of self-sufficing pioneer farming, the westward movement in the South extended the "cotton kingdom". After the capture of Mobile from Spain during the War of 1812 and the defeat of the Indians assured an outlet for the products of the interior cotton plantations, the movement into Alabama and Mississippi developed rapidly. Between 1810 and 1860 the population of Alabama and Mississippi grew from 200,000 to 1,660,000 and the proportion of slaves from 40 per cent to 47

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 95-96.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 159-160.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 166-167.

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per cent. During the same period the slave regime expanded through Louisiana and into Arkansas and Texas. The barren soil in Florida saved it from the plantation, and with the exception of a small region to the northwest, it remains outside of the Black Belt today.

The black soil prairies across central Alabama, which is today an area of great density of Negro population, was first opened to cotton culture in 1814 and within 20 years the slave plantation system was extending throughout its whole length. The Mississippi River valley, reaching from Tennessee and Arkansas to the mouth of the Red River, today the largest plantation area in the Black Belt, had already been rather well settled by 1840.

By 1860, on the eve of the revolution which would destroy it, the slave regime had reached its zenith. The capitalist power of the North had already become strong enough to hinder further expansion westward. The limits of the slave plantation area in 1860 also mark the limits of the area of continuous Negro majority. The 1930 Black Belt remains essentially the same area on which the mass of Negroes were enslaved by King Cotton, waving the sceptre of chattel slavery. Impose the outlines of the area of continuous Negro majority in 1930 upon an economic map of the South of 1860, and see that they are almost identical with the plantation area of 70 years ago! "Free" capitalism has not weakened the rule of King Cotton, but only placed another sceptre in his hand.

As long as chattel slavery ruled the South, an open and direct form of forced labor bound the Negro masses to the plantation. A measure of the effectiveness with which the Civil War broke these bonds should be found in the degree to which the area of continuous Negro concentration was dissipated and the Negro population more evenly distributed over the United States in the period which followed. Real freedom would have released the slave to become either a landowner himself or a wage-worker free to sell his labor power to a capitalist farmer or to the manufacturers of the North who were so urgently in need of it that they went to all lengths to obtain it in Europe. In reality, however, the Black Belt did not only remain intact, but in that continuous area in which the Negro was in the majority in 1930, the Negro population had almost doubled by 1910. This was due neither to a breaking up of the plantation system into individual farms owned by Negroes nor to industrial development in this area. The plantation, utilizing other forms of labor, has succeeded over this long period in holding the Negro population prisoner.

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But the plantation economy had to contend with antagonistic forces. Comparing the population of the 1930 area of Negro majority with the population of the same territory for each decade since 1860, we obtain the following results:

POPULATION OF THE BLACK BELT, 1860-1930

(Based upon the Federal Census of Population, by counties, for the respective years.)

Census Year	Total Population	Negro Population	% Negro of Total
1930	9,525,865	4,790,049	50.3
1920	8,968,132	4,806,565	53.6
1910	8,387,958	4,842,766	57.7
1900	7,498,900	4,488,991	59.9
1890	6,465,307	3,866,792	59.8
1880	5,750,410	3,466,924	60.3
1870	4,431,597	2,560,263	57.8
1860	4,362,009	2,461,099	56.4

This comparison shows that in the continuous area in which Negroes were half of the total population in 1930 they had previously constituted a larger proportion of the population. If, instead, the area of bare Negro majority were calculated for each decade separately, it could be shown that a larger area of Negro majority existed with little change until 1910. Between 1910 and 1930 it is evident that forces were operating which tended to dissipate the concentration of Negro population. While the Negro population of the Black Belt had increased by 96 per cent between 1860 and 1910, the white population had only increased 86 per cent during the same period. But between 1910 and 1930 the white population increased by 33 percent while the Negro population *decreased* by slightly over one per cent. Furthermore, factors were operating which left the rate of increase of the white population practically uniform in the Black Belt while exerting their main influence upon the Negroes. This is shown in the comparison of the rates of increase for the white and Negro population by decades. The increase recorded for the white population fluctuated between 13 per cent and 17 per cent. It is difficult to generalize on the rate of increase of the Negro population because of the undercounts in the various census enumerations, although a downward tendency probably began in 1900-1910. In the next two decades the Negro population decreased at the rate of 0.8 per cent and 0.3 per cent, respectively, representing an absolute loss in population

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of 52,717 in the entire Black Belt Proper.[10] The reduced proportion of the Negroes in the population of the Black Belt was, therefore, the sum total of an increasing white population and a decrease in the number of Negro inhabitants after 1910.

While a small decrease in the proportion of Negroes in the total population of the Border Territory took place during the same period, there was no absolute loss in Negro population, although the rate of increase did tend downward after 1910.

POPULATION OF THE BORDER TERRITORY, 1860-1930

Census Year	Total Population	Negro Population	% Negro of Total
1930	8,176,921	2,385,302	28.8
1920	6,937,042	2,192,457	31.6
1910	6,000,607	2,032,773	33.9
1900	4,775,570	1,708,411	35.8
1890	3,702,524	1,383,471	37.4
1880	2,935,387	1,120,844	38.0
1870	2,107,689	802,617	38.1
1860	1,899,060	705,095	37.1

During the period between the census enumerations of 1910 and 1930 there occurred the mass migration of Negroes into the North and the most intensive industrialization yet experienced by the South. In many quarters these events were hailed as nothing more nor less than the beginning of a rapid dissolution of the Black Belt, of a process of final disintegration of its plantation economy, and of the more even distribution of the Negro population in the country as a whole. In short, capitalism was now solving within its own confines and in a gradual, peaceful manner, without the discomforts of an agrarian mass upheaval on the plantations, those very problems which the Civil War period of revolution had left unsettled. True, the development of a revolutionary working class movement throughout the country would have been accelerated and the working class would have been spared the struggle against the heritage of the chattel slavery *if* the Civil War had accomplished its historic aims in full, *if* it had wiped out the economic vestige of the slave system in the form of the plantation and established the basis for Negro equality in capitalist society; or, failing this, if the forces of industrialization had been able to migrate the Black Belt out of existence, accelerate the process of assimilation, and at most leave the Negro question as one of achieving equal

10. In addition to the absolute loss in Negro population, the Black Belt also lost the natural increase, other things being equal, for this period. In the section on the migration, it is shown that about 1,000,000 Negroes migrated out of the Black Belt in the period 1910-1930.

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rights for a people no longer bound by the economic hang-overs of chattel slavery. To the measure that these things are accomplished under capitalism the proletarian revolution is so much to the good. But we are concerned with realities and not with useless speculation about the *ifs* of history.

In reality, the "epoch-making" events of 1910-1930 while inflicting some damage upon the prison bars of the Black Belt, did not remove them. Without at this point examining the results produced in the Black Belt economy, but limiting ourselves to the results of these forces as reflected in the population movements, we note the following changes.

The whole area did not respond uniformly. Because of internal developments and its geographical location, the Virginia region (I) of the Black Belt was more subject to the influences of industrialization. Despite the presence of fairly large cities and ports, the effect of industrialization was felt from an early date in a tendency to dissipate the Negro majority. The Negro population of this region had a low and static rate of increase since 1880, and prior to that date large numbers of Negro toilers had migrated into the newer plantation areas of the Mississippi Valley. In 1880 the region still counted 56.3 per cent of its population Negro, but by 1910 less than half of its inhabitants (49.2 per cent) were Negroes and in 1930 the proportion had been reduced to 43.7 per cent. Yet, the rate at which the Negro concentration was reduced is surprisingly low, in view of the especially favorable position of this area in relation to areas of more developed capitalism and to such large cities as Baltimore and Washington.

In the North Carolina region of the Black Belt, small-scale farming and some internal industrialization have contributed in retaining the Negro population. Here there has been practically no change in the proportion of Negroes since 1860, and a stable and high rate of increase was maintained throughout the period. Finally, in the Texas-Louisiana region (VI on the map), the latest plantation area fully developed under the slave regime, there was a rapid rise in the rate of increase in the Negro population in the decade 1920-1930 (17.6 as compared with 3.3 for the previous decade and 6.3 for 1900-1910).

It is precisely in the most extensive area of the plantation economy, in the South Carolina-Georgia, Alabama-Mississippi and Mississippi Valley Black Belt (Regions III, IV and V), which in 1930 contained 77 per cent of the total Negro population of the Black Belt, that the developments during the last two decades produced their most profound results. But how extensive were these results,

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how much had capitalism actually been able to accomplish towards balancing the social deficit of its revolutionary Civil War?

Already during the decade 1900-1910 a decline in the rate of increase of the Negro population of the three regions was apparent. The proportion of Negroes declined from 62 per cent in 1900 to 60 per cent in 1910. From 1910 to 1930 the Negro population had decreased by 4.8 per cent, while the white population increased 31 per cent. Despite the decrease in the absolute Negro population, and the further increase in the white population, the proportion of Negroes was reduced in this area as a whole only to 52 per cent in 1930. In face of the array of powerful forces which tended to drain the Black Belt of its Negro population, these plantation regions retained a decided Negro majority.

It is important to note, however, that during this 20-year period an absolute decrease in the Negro population occurred only in the older plantation regions comprised in the South Carolina-Georgia and Alabama Black Belts (Regions III and IV). The Negro population in these regions decreased 10 per cent. In the Mississippi Valley (Region V), on the other hand, the center of the large-scale and highly organized plantations, the Negro population had *increased* about 4 per cent. To the degree that these population statistics reflect the results of forces antagonistic to the plantation economy, we may conclude that the plantation suffered most precisely where it was weakest. Thus, the oldest of the three plantation regions, South Carolina-Georgia, was able to retain its Negro population and even increase it during 1910-1920, but in the following decade, when it suffered most from the agricultural crisis, it lost 11.2 per cent of its Negro population. The reverse process occurred in Alabama-Mississippi and the Valley. During 1910-1920 the former lost 11.7 per cent of its Negro population, the latter 2.4 per cent. But during the next ten years the trend was reversed in both these regions, the Negro populations having *increased* by 1.3 per cent and 6.6 per cent respectively.

Of course, the developments of the last 20 years produced other effects upon the Black Belt economy, not shown by the population figures. But the area of continuous Negro majority has only been slightly altered, indicating that those factors which have in the past confined a large proportion of the Negro people to the territorial limits set by the slave regime still persist.

However, an important redistribution of the Negro population has taken place. In 1860, 55.4 per cent of the Negro population was located in the Black Belt, 15.8 per cent in the Border Territory, 15.2 in other southern territory and 13.6 per cent in the North. During the course of the next 50 years a very slow and gradual

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redistribution occurred. After a half-century of freedom, no least important part of which is the freedom to move from especially oppressive conditions, the Black Belt still retained 49.3 per cent of all Negroes living in the United States. More of the Negro population was subjected to the only slightly less unbearable conditions of the Black Belt periphery which now contained 20.7 per cent of the Negro population, while only an additional 1.4 per cent over 1860 was found in the North. The most drastic change occurred between 1910 and 1930, when the distribution was as follows: Black Belt, 40.3 per cent; Border Territory, 19.8 per cent; other southern territory, 13.8 per cent; North (including an insignificant number in the West), 26.1 per cent.

The progressive features of this redistribution cannot be overlooked. Some hundreds of thousands of Negro toilers have escaped from the stifling slave atmosphere of the Black Belt. This did not change the situation there fundamentally; in fact, it depleted the Black Belt of its most aggressive and militant Negro toilers. Nor does it mean that the Negro masses who found their way to other parts of the country had discovered the "promised land" of freedom. Its significance lies in the increase of the number of Negro industrial proletarians and their entry into the modern class struggle. Freed at least from the direct economic bonds of the plantation system, a larger proportion of the Negro masses were now living in areas of more highly developed capitalism where conditions were more favorable for the development of the Negro middle class. The process of class differentiation among the Negro people was accelerated. The struggle for full emancipation was raised to a higher plane and brought into living contact with the more advanced section of the working class movement. Under the special conditions of the War and Post-War period, capitalism in the United States had been able to engender a movement which it had stifled during the preceding half century.

Is this a tendency which can be expected to continue at the swift pace of the last two decades, or even at a more moderate rate? Yes, say pseudo-Marxists such as Norman Thomas, and also-Leninists such as Jay Lovestone and his followers, following the usual bourgeois interpretation of recent developments in the South. This is as much as to say that capitalism in the United States is able to overcome one of its sharpest basic contradictions by destroying the economic remnants of slavery and to perform the progressive task of removing the main economic base for the subjection of the Negro people. This is an axiom of the Socialist Party position, as expressed by Norman Thomas, that "what the Negro wants and needs is what the white worker wants and needs; neither more

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nor less;" and of the Lovestonite vigorous denial of the national nature of the Negro question. These gentlemen have complacently "overlooked" one of the most important peculiarities of the development of American capitalism which has at the same time become one of its greatest contradictions. If the proletariat were to take their advice and blissfully leave a basic task of its own revolution in the benevolent hands of capitalism heavy with fascism, it would not only weaken its own class solidarity of white and Negro workers, but lose one of its most effective allies in the struggle against capitalism and endanger the success of the proletarian revolution.

Our answer to this question is a decisive no! Further on we analyze those factors which brought about the changes of the War and post-War period, their effects upon the economic remnants of slavery, the nature of industrialization in the South and its effects upon the Black Belt economy, the development of capitalism in southern agriculture, and the present situation in the South in relation to that stage of development in which capitalism finds itself today. Only one conclusion is possible on the basis of these facts: The recent redistribution of the Negro population did not constitute a tendency, but only a temporary movement stimulated by transitory factors which impressed certain important new characteristics on the Negro question without changing its fundamental nature. In fact, since the beginning of the economic crisis there has even been a reversal of the movement of population from the Black Belt. Up to 1910 capitalist development in the South did not weaken, but strengthened the plantation economy; after that capitalism was no longer able to uproot the hang-overs of chattel slavery, so intimately had they become intertwined in its own structure; instead, it is being strangled by them. The historic task of destroying the last vestige of chattel slavery and achieving Negro liberation falls within the domain of the proletarian revolution.

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Figures on the American Economic Crisis

AS OF APRIL, 1934

By JOHN IRVING and PHIL MAYER

(*Labor Research Association*)

AS anticipated in last month's comments, the secondary peak of the "N.R.A. prosperity" has nearly completed itself. The rise from March to April in the *Annalist* index of business activity has amounted to .9 points, as compared with the rise of 3.8 points from January to February, and of 1.5 points from February to March. The index now stands, as of April, at 79.2. (In Table 1, as in all the other tables, the decimals are disregarded.) This compares with the high point of 89.5 reached in the primary uprush of the N.R.A. boomlet last July, with the pre-N.R.A. low of 58.5 in March, 1933. The reaction from last summer's rise carried the index down to 64.7 last November. Thus, the first inflationary stimulants raised American business activity 31 points, or 53 per cent. The second series of "shots in the arm", including the devaluation of the dollar in foreign markets by some 40 per cent, lifted it only 14.5 points, or slightly over 22 per cent.

Indications at present are that the May index of business activity will be lower than the April index, and that decline will continue during the next few months. This will be more than the normal *seasonal* decline.

TABLE 1—PRODUCTION[1]

	1934		APRIL				
THE FIELD	Apr.	Mar.	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
General Index	79	78	64	63	86	102	115
Steel ingot prod.....	71	60	33	30	68	103	127
Pig iron prod.....	55	51	20	27	65	104	121
Cotton consump. ...	91	90	84	63	92	98	118
Automobile prod. ...	79	79	41	33	77	101	142
Lumber prod.	—	61	39	44	78	128	146
Cement prod.	—	51	35	44	92	113	117

1. The *Annalist* Index of Business Activity. "Normal", that is, the computed long-time trend, with the seasonal variations eliminated, equals 100%. The indexes given here should be thought of as percentages of this "normal".

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One of the forces that bear upon this impending decline in the production index of the American economy is to be found essentially in a factor which the Roosevelt government has failed to reckon with. The cycical rise of production *within* the period of the capitalist crisis is made possible by an intensification of the exploitation of labor on the basis of a lowered level of real wages: a "minimum" wage level harnessed upon the workers with the connivance of their misleaders in the face of increasing labor productivity through speed-up and rationalization, and in the face of rising costs of the necessaries of life. Under such conditions new profits are assured, and therefore a rise in productive activity occurs.

This situation could be achieved only so long as "labor" acquiesces. But "labor" is not acquiescing. The increasing militancy of the workers in one basic industry after another, their refusal to permit themselves to be reduced to a level of peonage for the sake of the Roosevelt "recovery program", are suspending the N.R.A. windfalls which have increased corporation profits several hundred per cent these last few months as compared with a year ago. (See

TABLE 2—EMPLOYMENT AND PAYROLLS[1]

The Field	Employment			Payrolls		
	—1934—		1933	—1934—		1933
	Apr.	Mar.	Apr.	Apr.	Mar.	Apr.
A. *Mfg. Indust.* (1923-25=100)						
Gen. Index (90 Ind.)	82	81	60	67	65	39
Slaught. and meat pkg.	92	93	76	76	75	59
Cotton goods	103	103	72	86	85	43
Knit goods	115	112	93	109	107	65
Silk and rayon goods	78	85	63	63	68	36
Woolen and worsted goods	75	82	57	55	61	34
Men's clothing	88	89	75	61	66	37
Women's clothing	132	131	123	99	108	78
Iron and steel	—	70	—	—	52	—
Elec. mach., apparatus and supp.	64	62	44	48	44	27
Foundry & machine-shop prod.	72	68	43	54	50	23
Automobiles	115	108	50	107	98	34
Steam railroad repair shops	57	55	47	53	48	35
Boots and shoes	92	92	81	82	84	53
B. *Non-Mfg. Indust.* (1929=100)						
Anthracite mining	58	68	52	52	82	37
Bituminous mining	72	78	64	51	59	27
Telephone and telegraph	70	70	72	69	70	68
Power and light	82	82	77	77	76	69
Retail trade	88	87	79	72	70	60
Steam railroads (1926=100)	—	—	52	—	—	109[2]

1. Compiled by the U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, except steam railroads (non-mfg.), which is compiled by the Interstate Commerce Commission.
2. In millions of dollars.

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the National City Bank *Letter* of April, 1934, and recent issues of L.R.A.'s *Economic Notes.*)

Accumulation of stocks of goods has led to a slowing up of orders. Code industries are calling upon the N.R.A. to permit them to close up their plants (it will give them, incidentally, a chance to dispose of "trouble makers"—the National Labor Board will provide the refined "formula"), and Administrator Johnson is appealing for "a renewal of confidence" in the Blue Eagle. The administration itself is poising its injection needle, this time filled with a dose of silver. This is expected to provide a further inflationary stimulus.

In line with this decline in the productive activity of the country, we note the definite slowing up of the employment index. Between March and April the general index of employment rose 1.5 points, as compared with a rise of 4.2 points between January and February, and of 7.3 points between February and March.

TABLE 3—PER CAPITA WEEKLY EARNINGS[1]

	1934		March		
THE FIELD	Mar.	Feb.	1933	1932	1931
A. *Mfg. Industries*					
Average (89 Industries)	$19.48	$19.08	$15.75	$19.81	$24.30
Slaught. and meat packing	20.72	20.78	18.65	22.47	25.50
Cotton goods	13.28	12.98	9.54	12.21	14.56
Knit goods	16.14	15.74	11.56	14.73	17.06
Silk and rayon goods	15.06	15.20	11.32	13.34	18.91
Woolen and worsted goods	17.05	17.23	13.02	17.65	21.13
Men's clothing	17.61	17.01	12.69	16.14	20.54
Women's clothing	21.35	20.81	14.91	21.70	27.19
Iron and steel	20.26	18.62	12.73	16.17	27.11
Elec. machinery, apparatus and supplies	19.73	19.26	18.67	22.37	27.46
Foundry and machine-shop products	20.23	19.68	14.40	18.60	24.76
Automobiles	25.70	24.02	17.18	25.01	28.78
Steam rail. repair shops	24.28	23.76	21.25	23.17	28.40
Boots and shoes	18.83	18.78	13.55	17.19	19.56
B. *Non-Mfg. Industries*					
Anthracite mining	35.57	30.39	25.98	24.13	25.14
Bituminous mining	19.44	18.37	11.73	16.40	18.86
Telephone and telegraph	27.28	26.35	26.21	29.08	29.88
Power and light	28.89	28.26	29.34	31.38	32.99
Retail trade	19.42	19.79	18.96	21.73	24.06
Steam railroads[2]	——	119.0	120.2	127.7	143.6

1. Compiled by U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, except steam railroads (non-mfg.), which is computed from figures of Interstate Commerce Commission.
2. Per capita monthly earnings.

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For payrolls, the index rises have been from January to February, 6.2 points; from February to March, 9.2 points, and from March to April, 2.5 points. Furthermore, even this slight rise between March and April in both employment and payrolls, was largely the result of the rise in the automobile industry (see Table 2). But the output of that industry during the past four months virtually amounts to about 2/3 of the maximum probable demand *for the entire year*, reckoned at 2,400,000 passenger cars and trucks. Production during the remaining eight months of the year cannot be expected to run at more than 1/3 of the present rate.

Another, and what seems to be a very significant change, in the direction of employment and payrolls, appears in this month's figures; namely, the decline in the payroll indexes for several industries in the face of either increases or much smaller decreases in the employment indexes (Table 2). In the women's clothing industry, for instance, the employment index rose slightly between March and April, but payrolls declined 9 per cent. In anthracite mining, the employment index declined ten points, but the payrolls index

TABLE 4—NUMBER AND EXTENT OF STRIKES AND LOCKOUTS[1]

THE FIELD	Number of Disputes	Number of Workers Involved	Number of Man-Days Lost
1934			
February	72	87,301	1,031,747
January	73	40,585	636,650
1933			
December	56	20,832	338,746
November	56	37,137	1,160,565
October	107	51,668	3,067,967
September	180	235,071	3,642,431
February—			
1933	63	10,909	109,860
1932	56	33,713	460,701
1931	52	20,473	223,660
1930	44	37,301	436,788
1929	54	22,858	926,679
Highest monthly average[2]	371 (1917)[3]	346,695 (1919)	3,149,950 (1927)
Lowest monthly average[2]	152 (1929)	13,176 (1930)	227,531 (1930)

1. Partial figures compiled by U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of the beginning of the month.

2. The highest and lowest monthly averages for *any* year since 1916 for "number of disputes" and "number of workers involved"; since 1927 for "number of man-days lost". These figures are derived by dividing the total figures for the highest and lowest years by 12.

3. Years in parentheses indicate the year in which highest and lowest monthly averages occurred.

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declined 30 points (less than 15 and over 36 per cent respectively). In these figures we see the further advance of the stagger system in all its viciousness: total weekly earnings reduced to starvation levels; opportunities for discrimination against "undesirable" workers; worker pitted against worker.

In Table 5 on industrial disputes, we see in figures the rapidity of the spread of the revolt of the American workers against the Blue Eagleism of Roosevelt-Green-Wolman & Co. Not quite the same number of strikes in February as in January involved more than twice the number of striking workers. This was in February. The Bureau of Labor Statistics is late in reporting on "industrial disputes." But readers of *The Communist* and of the *Daily Worker* and of the Labor Research Association's *Economic Notes*, know that the tide of the workers' revolt has been rising since in ever-increasing militancy.

Finally, a word about commodity stocks, listed in Table 7. In the uprush of production that began last midsummer, the index of domestic stocks climbed from the low of 133 in May to 171 in November. Production rapidly outstripped consumption. Since November the commodity stocks index has been going down as a result of the relatively greater decline of production than consumption during these months. But note that the index for March is still some 9 points above that of a year ago. Stocks of manufactured textiles are more than twice as high (167 as compared with 81). Only "chemicals and allied products" have smaller stocks

TABLE 5—COMMODITY PRICES AND COST OF LIVING

THE FIELD	—1934—		—APRIL—				
	Apr.	Mar.	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
A. *Wholesale Prices*—							
Combined Index (784)[1]	73	74	60	66	75	90	96
B. *Retail Prices*—							
Food[1]	66	68	56	65	77	94	94
Dept. store index[2]	89	90	69	78	94	—	—
C. *Cost of Living*[3]	75	76	69	76	85	94	66
D. *Agricultural*[4]							
Farm prices	55	56	39	44	67	95	102
Prices paid by farmers	78	78	66	73	85	98	101

1. Wholesale prices (1926=100) and retail food prices (converted from 1913=100 to 1926=100) compiled by U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

2. Fairchild's combined index of department store articles (Dec. 1930=100). No figures prior to 1931.

3. National Industrial Conference Board's cost of living index (converted from 1923=100 to 1926=100).

4. U. S. Bureau of Agricultural Economics' indexes (converted from Aug. 1909-July 1914=100 to 1926=100).

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this year than last. Relative to our consumption power, production is in a more unfavorable position than it was last year, in all but the "chemical and allied products" industries, the chief war industries. In these industries consumption has been in excess of production.

TABLE 6—CONSUMPTION[1]

	—1934—		March				
THE FIELD	Mar.	Feb.	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
Dept. store sales[3]	77	70	57	72	97	107	112
Dept. store stocks[2]	—	66	54	73	84	97	99
Chain store sales[3]	88	85	75	85	—	—	—
Variety store sales[4]	95	88	75	84	96	103	105
Mail order and store sales (mill. dollars)	44	36	28	34	43	48	53
Exports[2]	50	47	28	41	62	96	128
Imports[2]	44	42	26	37	59	84	107

1. Compiled by U. S. Department of Commerce. All indexes based on dollar sales.
2. 1923-25=100.
3. Average same month 1929-31=100.
4. 1929-31=100.

TABLE 7—COMMODITY STOCKS ON HAND[1]

1923-25 = 100

	—1934—		MARCH				
THE FIELD	Mar.	Feb.	1933	1932	1931	1930	1929
A. *Domestic (All)*	148	154	139	155	151	141	134
Manufactured gds. (All)	108	109	97	110	119	127	125
Chemical products	117	113	123	134	132	141	132
Food products	83	93	69	84	94	104	108
Iron and steel	99	99	85	99	146	147	157
Textiles	167	165	81	90	94	120	123
Raw Materials (All)	176	187	169	188	173	152	141
Foodstuffs	188	192	163	196	202	185	181
Metals	108	115	82	134	145	83	66
Textile materials	231	252	240	251	196	153	128
B. *World* Cotton	209	193	231	229	220	171	155

1. Compiled by U. S. Department of Commerce.

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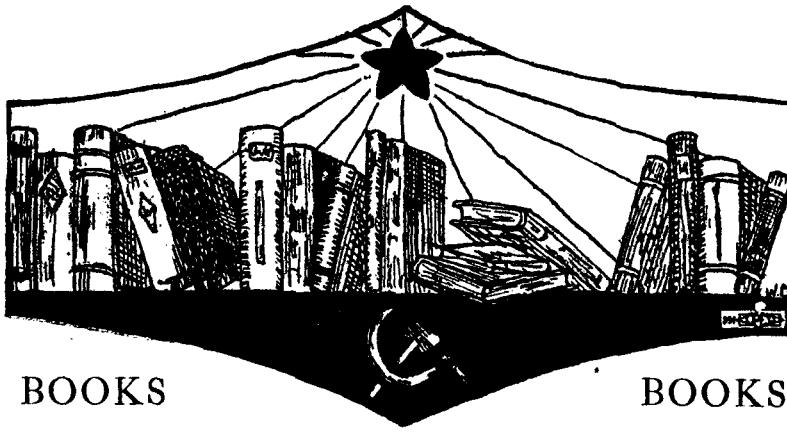

FASCISM, SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY, AND THE COMMUNISTS, *by V. Knorin.* Speech at the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. *Workers Library Publishers,* 10 cents.

Reviewed by JAMES S. ALLEN

IN 1928, social-democracy was in power in Germany. The Prussian government had been in its hands since 1918. At the Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Germany held in 1928, Rudolf Hilferding declared: "The Communists are going under. This can only be a matter of time. . . ."

The German social-democrats' "lesser evil", President von Hindenburg, appointed Hitler as Chancellor in January, 1933. It was now the turn of Goebbels, chief of Nazi propaganda, to declare: "In fifty years' time no man in the world will know any more that Marxism ever existed. The world idea of fascism will march and the C.P. of Germany will be finished forever."

Just as Goebbels finished the sentence begun by Hilferding five years before, the fascist dictatorship has finished the work begun by social-democracy with the "defense of the fatherland" during the World War. In 1918-1923 the German socialist leaders helped to establish and defend the bourgeois dictatorship in the form of the Weimar Republic by supprssing the revolution in Germany. Since then they did all in their power to embellish, defend and preserve this "new era" of capitalism, deluding the workers and holding them back from struggle, especially when the world crisis began to strike deadly blows in Germany.

In his speech at the Thirteenth Plenum of the Communist International, packed full of sharp and clear analysis, Knorin shows how social-democracy became social-fascist, paving the way for the coming to power of fascism in Germany. "If social-democracy in 1918," he declared, "had been a revolutionary Marxist Party, Europe would have been Socialist long ago." But even if it had been only a bourgeois-liberal party, if during 1932-1933, when it was talking so much about "the defense of democracy against the fascists", it had supported the general strikes called again and again by the Communists, Hitler could have been defeated by the united forces of the proletariat. In July, 1932, again in January, 1933, when the situation was already less favorable, and again on January 30, when Hitler was already in power, the Communists called for general strikes against fascism. Social-democracy

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cautioned the workers against "prematurely expending the powder of the general strike"; it sabotaged the strike movement, and gave German finance capital the opportunity to place Hitler in power. "If social-democracy in 1933 had been even a democratic party," concludes Knorin, "Germany could not have become fascist."

Without social-democracy, there would not have been fascism in Germany. This was also the case in Italy, where the Centrist and reformist leadership of the Socialist Party disorganized the revolutionary movement—after the workers had seized the factories—and made it possible for Italian capitalism to save itself through the agency of the Mussolini Black Shirts. This was no less the case in Austria where, under the cover of radical phrases, Otto Bauer and Karl Renner offered all kinds of compromises to Dollfuss—even when shots were already ringing from the workers' apartment houses in Vienna and in Linz.

German social-democracy perished, declares Knorin, "not because Hitler proved stronger, but because it *killed itself politically and morally, having refused to fight fascism, capitulated before fascism, consented to enter its service.*" Hitler demanded such large doses of nationalism and chauvinism from social-democracy, such complete submission to the will of finance capital, that this "overripe fraulein" was unable to give it without destroying the social-democratic organizations, whose members would never have stomached such vile betrayal. Not that the social-democratic Executive was unwilling; in fact, Wels resigned from the Second International at the beginning of March, 1933, hoping in this way to preserve the social-democratic organizations in a Nazi Germany, and the social-democratic deputies voted in favor of Hitler's policies in the Reichstag on May 17, 1933. But "Hitler was obviously in a hurry". Social-democracy collapsed as a party—its organizations were destroyed by fascism because they offered a reservoir for working class opposition to the Nazis and a center for Communist influence.

In view of Otto Bauer's verbiage today about "the dictatorship of the proletariat", and the recriminations that are being mutually indulged in by various Socialist Parties and grouplets, it is well to pay close attention to Knorin's point that social-democracy is bankrupt, not only in those countries where fascism has come to power, but internationally. Knorin reviews the situation in Spain, Austria (the Plenum was held before the February struggle), Latvia, Esthonia, Czechoslovakia, and other countries, and shows that there, too, social-democracy while it may have criticized the German leaders, was pursuing exactly the same course in relation to fascism. Since this speech was delivered, events in Austria, Latvia, and Bulgaria have fully confirmed his analysis. While many of the socialist leaders in other countries admit the bankruptcy of German social-democracy, as Norman Thomas does in this country, they refuse to admit their own bankruptcy. Knorin points out that there is nothing new in this, that "Wels only did what MacDonald had done before him, only less successfully and with different consequences. Then Wels and Vandervelde criticized MacDonald; now Vandervelde [Belgium], Blum [France], Henderson [England], and Bauer [Austria] have criticized Wels." But they continue traveling along the path of social-fascism, nonetheless. Norman Thomas may talk about the bankruptcy of German social-democracy, but that did not prevent him from seeing the "lesser evil" in the Roosevelt New Deal and the "splendid opportunities for labor" under it.

Knorin gives the following reasons for the crisis of social-democracy: (1) The world is on the eve of a new period of imperialist wars, the prep-

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arations for which have led to outbursts of rabid nationalism. The Second International is collapsing because in each country the socialist Executive is going over to the side of its own ruling class. (2) Social-democracy could exist only when parliamentarism existed. Because of the great centralization of State power by monopoly capitalism in order to save itself, democratic forms, including parliaments, have been done away with in a number of countries, and the Socialist Party is no longer needed there in the direct apparatus of government. (3) The growth of poverty among the masses and the increasing influence of the Communist Party have caused social-democracy to lose its mass influence and have compelled it to comply more quickly with the demands of the bourgeoisie, to "*become fascized at a still more rapid rate.*"

The attitude to the German revolution, declares Knorin, is one of the three great questions which at present measure the maturity and class-consciousness of every Communist and every Communist Party. The others are the questions of the U.S.S.R. and of the Chinese revolution and the Chinese Soviet Republic. In this light, he reviews the reactions and activities of the various Communist Parties in response to the German events, and among those who did not respond so well in proportion to their strength he names the American Party, which "for a considerable time did not devote serious attention to this question or explain the essence of the events in Germany to the masses". In this connection, he stresses the importance of exposing the defeatist and counter-revolutionary views of the Trotskyites. The sections of his speech dealing with the struggle against "Left" social-democracy and the Right deviations in the Communist Parties are of greatest importance and should be read carefully, as well as his discussion of the tactics of the united front in Germany where he contrasts the revolutionary united front tactics of Thaelmann with the opportunist tactics of Guttmann in Czechoslovakia.

This pamphlet is of the greatest value for all workers who wish to understand the meaning of fascism and the role of the social-fascists. Here, as in the other main reports delivered at the Plenum, international experience is gathered and analyzed. It should be read carefully, for there is much crowded into its pages. It should be discussed in connection with the decisions of our Party Convention, and applied to our tasks here. It helps to build that "*will for the struggle for power*" which, Knorin concludes, is what is now demanded above all of every Communist.

ERRATUM

In the May, 1934, issue of *The Communist*, a serious typographical error was made in the main Resolution of the Eighth Convention of the C.P.U.S.A., which reversed the meaning of the sentence. On page 447, the first sentence should read: "The Party must strengthen its fractions in the T.U.U.L. unions, and especially give attention to strengthening the independent revolutionary unions of steel, auto, marine, textile workers among the millions of unorganized and consolidate the recent gains of these trade unions."

All readers should make this change in their copies of the May issue.

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THE THIRTEENTH PLENUM OF THE E.C.C.I. made it the duty of "all Sections of the Communist International to be on their guard at every turn of events, and to exert every effort, without losing a moment, for the revolutionary preparation of the proletariat for the impending decisive battles for power."

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